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THE DAILY NEWS
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THE
WAR CORRESPONDENCE
OF THE
DAILY NEWS

*CONTINUED FROM THE RECAPTURE OF ORLEANS BY
THE GERMANS TO THE PEACE*

EDITED WITH NOTES AND COMMENTS

FORMING A CONTINUOUS HISTORY OF THE

WAR BETWEEN GERMANY AND FRANCE

WITH MAP

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PREFACE.

THE Letters composing this volume were written and published in continuation of those collected in the volume entitled "War Correspondence of the Daily News," issued last December. After the fall of Strasburg and Metz, the interest of the war was more than ever concentrated upon and around Paris, and the operations of the French armies, with their successes and misfortunes, were estimated with reference to the hope of relieving the capital. In the present volume the story of the war is resumed at the recapture of Orleans by the Germans, after battles that effaced advantages which had seemed for a time the presage of ultimate victory for the French, and it is continued to the conclusion of a peace crowned by the occupation of Paris. The brilliant triumph of the Germans, and its influence upon civilization, have yet to be tested by time, which, it may be hoped, will heal the wounds inflicted on France. Our task has been, not to anticipate the verdict of history, but to group a series of life-like pictures of some of the greatest events of this age.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE WAR

FROM THE RECAPTURE OF ORLEANS BY THE GERMANS TO THE CONCLUSION OF PEACE.

Dec. 5.

The Germans enter Orleans at 1 A.M. Count Moltke sends intelligence of the fact to General Trochu.

Dec. 7.

The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg is attacked by General Chanzy between Meung and Beaugency, and a contest begins which continues for four days.

Dec. 8.

The Germans capture Beaugency, with 1,100 prisoners and six guns.

Dec. 9.

The battle of Beaugency continued. Dieppe occupied by a detachment of General Manteuffel's army.

Dec. 10.

The seat of the French Government is transferred to Tours. Ham capitulates to the French, who take 200 prisoners.

Dec. 10.

General Chanzy concentrates his forces, and retires to the Forest of Marchenoir.

Dec. 12.

Phalsburg surrenders, its garrison of 1,800 men becoming prisoners of war.

Dec. 14.

Montmédy capitulates, its garrison of 3,000 becoming prisoners. General Chanzy is attacked at Vendôme and Fréteval.

Dec. 16.

Vendôme evacuated by the French, and Fréteval abandoned.

Dec. 18.

The Germans capture Nuits after five hours' severe fighting.

Dec. 20.

The Tenth German Corps attack 6,000 Mobiles near Monnaie, and drive them to Nôtre-Dame d'Oe, near Tours. The Germans evacuate Nuits.

Dec. 21.

The garrison of Paris make sorties against Stains, Le Bourget, Sevran, and Ville Evrart. After several hours' hard fighting the French are repulsed, but leave detachments at Ville Evrart and Maison Blanche. The Germans appear at Tours, and meeting with resistance, throw shells into it. The Mayor comes forward and asks for terms, but the Germans retire.

Dec. 23.

An indecisive action is fought at Pont-Noyelles, between the French Army of the North under General Faidherbe, and a portion of the German First Army under General Manteuffel.

Dec. 25.

Six English coal-vessels are sunk by the Prussians in the Seine, at Duclair, the port of Rouen.

Dec. 27.

The German siege artillery opens fire upon the entrenched position of Mont Avron. The German troops under General Glumer evacuate Dijon, retiring upon Vesoul.

Dec. 28.

The batteries of Mont Avron are silenced.

Dec. 29.

The Germans visit Mont Avron, and direct the fire of their siege batteries upon the north-east forts.

Dec. 31.

The Germans bombard Mézières.

Jan. 2, 1871.

Mézières capitulates, the Germans making 2,000 prisoners. General von Gûben is attacked in the villages north of Bapaume.

Jan. 3.

Bapaume is attacked by the French under General Faidherbe, who gain possession of a portion of the town. In the night, General Faidherbe retires for want of supplies.

Jan. 4.

The Second German Army, under Prince Frederick Charles, begins a movement of concentration towards Vendôme.

Jan. 5.

The forts of the southern front of the defences of Paris are bombarded. The fortress of Rocroi surrenders.

Jan. 6.

Victory of Prince Frederick Charles before Vendôme; and defeat of Duke William of Mecklenburg, near St. Amand.

Jan. 10.

Battle of Changé, the Germans victorious with heavy loss.

Jan. 11.

Battle of Le Mans, severe fighting with apparently indecisive results, but General Chanzy, after the Breton Mobiles have given way, orders a retreat.

Jan. 12.

Attack on the Germans at Les Noyers, to cover French retreat; the Germans enter Le Mans.

Jan. 13.

Prince Frederick Charles establishes his head-quarters in Le Mans. General Schmidt captures the stores of the camp at Conlie. General Bourbaki captures Arcey and St. Marie.

Jan. 15.

General von Werder is seriously attacked by General Bourbaki before Chagey, but maintains his positions. General Chanzy issues an order of the day stigmatizing the "shameful cowardice" of a portion of his troops before Le Mans.

Jan. 16.

General Bourbaki renews his attack on Von Werder with increased forces, but fails to move him. Colonel Isnard, by orders of General Faidherbe, recaptures St. Quentin.

Jan. 17.

Longwy is invested. Bourbaki renews his attack, and again failing orders a general retreat.

Jan. 18.

The King of Prussia assumes the title and dignity of Emperor. Von Göben attacks Faidherbe, and drives him to St. Quentin.

Jan. 19.

Generals Trochu, Vinoy, and Ducrot head a grand sortie from Paris, with 100,000 men, who, fighting all day, gain some ground, and then retreat. Faidherbe is defeated in a decisive battle, and driven through and beyond St. Quentin with enormous loss.

Jan. 20.

General Trochu requests an armistice of two days to bury his dead—it is refused.

Jan. 21.

Dijon is attacked by Prussian corps of Mantenfel's Fifth Army, on their way to co-operate with Von Werder against Bourbaki. The attack is repulsed by Garibaldi. Dôle is occupied by the Germans, who capture 230 railway waggons laden with provisions, forage, and clothing.

Jan. 23.

Renewed Prussian attack and repulse at Dijon.

Jan. 24.

M. Jules Favre appears at Versailles, and inquires for Count Bismarck.

Jan. 25.

Longwy capitulates.

Jan. 28.

M. Jules Favre signs an Armistice-Convention, giving the Germans possession of all the forts around Paris, and recognizing the army of Paris—Line, Mobiles, and sailors—as prisoners of war, and making the city liable to a war contribution of £8,000,000.

Jan. 29.

Mont Valérien and the other forts are occupied by the Germans.

Jan. 30.

Large numbers of General Bourbaki's army cross the Swiss frontier.

Feb. 1.

General Clinchamp, commanding the army lately under Bourbaki, signs a convention with General Herzog, under which 80,000 French troops pass into Switzerland.

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- Feb. 8.**
Elections to the National Assembly take place throughout France.
- Feb. 12.**
Meeting of the National Assembly at Bordeaux.
- Feb. 13.**
The members of the Government of National Defence lay down their powers.
- Feb. 16.**
The Armistice is extended from the 19th to the 24th of February.
- Feb. 17.**
M. Thiers appointed Chief of the Executive Government of France.
- Feb. 22.**
Further extension of the Armistice to February 26.
- Feb. 26.**
Signature of a Treaty of Peace.
- Mar. 1.**
Entry of German troops into Paris. Ratification of the Treaty of Peace by the National Assembly.
- Mar. 2.**
The German troops evacuate Paris.
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M A P.

MAP OF PARIS *Frontispiece.*

THE WAR CORRESPONDENCE

OF THE

“DAILY NEWS.”

CHAPTER XIV.

ON the 5th of December a German *parlementaire* presented himself at the French outposts, and requested to be conducted to the Governor of Paris. He was taken to General Trochu, to whom he delivered the following letter:—

“*Versailles, Dec. 5.*”

“It may be useful to inform your Excellency that the Army of the Loire was defeated near Orleans yesterday, and that that town is reoccupied by the German troops. Should, however, your Excellency deem it expedient to be convinced of the fact through one of your own officers, I will not fail to provide him with a safe-conduct to come and return. Receive, General, the expression of the high considerations with which I have the honour to be, your very humble and obedient servant,

“The Chief of the Staff,

“VON MOLTKE.”

There could be no doubt as to the motive of the

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German commander in communicating, at the earliest possible moment, and in this formal manner, intelligence which was certain to reach Paris in a few days without his intervention. In October M. Gambetta had promised that, if Paris would hold out only a few weeks, it should be delivered; and in the same month another member of the Bordeaux Government had publicly offered to "have his head cut off" if the Army of the Loire, which, he said, was 300,000 strong, did not relieve Paris in December. It was allowable, then, for Counts Bismarck and Moltke to assume that intelligence of a defeat of the Loire Army so decisive as to be sealed by the capture of Orleans, would produce a strong impression on the mind of the Government of National Defence, and, perhaps, lead to such a review of the condition of France and its armies as would prepare the way for negotiations for peace. It was known that Count Bismarck intended to give the French Government an opportunity of this kind, and that he was much disappointed that no advantage was taken of his movement. General Trochu received the *parlementaire* very hospitably, and, in a conversation on military affairs, gave him to understand that he cast no doubt upon the accuracy of his information.

Count Moltke's letter was discussed on the same day at a special Council of Ministers. One of their number, M. Ernest Picard, thought the opportunity should be embraced of examining the question whether an honourable peace might not then be made, and his opinion appeared to make some impression on his colleagues. General Trochu, however, remarked that these overtures only proved the critical position of the enemy in the heart of a hostile country, and in the depth of winter; that the German victory might be less complete than it was represented; that everything was to be gained by continuing the struggle until

help came from the provinces; that Paris could hold out a long time, and that victories might follow reverses. "*Combattre*," he concluded, "*combattre encore, combattre toujours!*" His eloquence and enthusiasm induced the Council to decide unanimously on the continuance of the war, and the *parlementaire* was sent back with the following letter:—

"Paris, Dec. 6.

"Your Excellency thought it might be useful to inform me that the Army of the Loire was defeated near Orleans, and that that town is reoccupied by German troops.

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of that communication, which I do not think it expedient to verify through the means which your Excellency suggests to me. Receive, General, the expression of the high consideration with which I have the honour to be, your very humble and very obedient servant,

"The Governor of Paris, General TROCHU."

This interchange of communications was at once made known to the citizens, by a note transmitted to the journals. The members of the Government appended to Count Moltke's letter a commentary, which pledged them to a strenuous prosecution of the defence. "This news," they said, "which reaches us through the enemy, supposing it to be accurate, does not deprive us of our right to rely on the great movement of France rushing to our relief. It changes nothing either in our resolutions or our duties. A single word sums them up—to fight! Long live France! Long live the Republic!"

Thus heroically did Paris, in the after-words of the same Government, "resign itself to the most cruel privations, and accept ruin, disease, and death."

The "great movement of France," on which General Trochu and his colleagues relied, was no vain dream, and can we say that the Government had no right to hope for success as the reward of continued resistance? It did not so appear at the time to impartial neutral observers. Military students amongst ourselves pointed out that France had gained greatly in strength ever since the Emperor's surrender at Sedan. At that date, Paris alone offered a show of resistance, and the garrison of the capital, numerous as it was, was composed of raw levies and of beaten and demoralized troops.

Within the two months that had elapsed, Paris had been rendered impregnable to an assault; she had an ample and well-appointed garrison; two powerful active armies had been created within her walls, and in the recent battles had given proofs of real courage and discipline. Outside Paris, and intended to relieve it, three armies—those of the North, of the West, and of the Loire—had, as it were, grown up suddenly, and were increasing daily in strength. These armies were, no doubt, of inferior quality, being made up chiefly of young troops; but they were very formidable in numbers; they held positions that seriously threatened their foe; and the Army of the Loire, though lately defeated, had shown that it could fight, and that it was far from a contemptible force. Nor was this all. Behind the lines created by Paris and her relieving armies France was gathering in strength. She was renewing her lost material, was obtaining powerful artillery, and organizing recruits by hundreds of thousands. If these levies were as yet but of little value, before many months were over they might become good soldiers.

True, the German armies were large and of the best quality, but within or around Paris they were extremely inferior in numbers to those they confronted. As long as Paris should hold out, the German armies would remain

exposed to most formidable operations, both from within the city and from without, on the part of an enemy greatly superior in numbers, and having remarkable advantages of position. They were, from the very nature of the case, liable to be caught between two assailants, and placed between two fires, should the active army of Paris and even one of the relieving armies be able to join hands; and in that event they would be in considerable danger. Furthermore, the lines of their communications even close to Paris must remain seriously menaced, and should a powerful force once lay hold of these arteries of military life, they would certainly be obliged to raise the siege, and probably be in very great difficulties. In any case, it was argued, the defence of Paris would have the effect of raising France from the lowest point of military depression; of making the chances of war, so long as the capital held out, unfavourable in many respects to the Germans; and of gaining time for her to protract the struggle. Under the influence of considerations of this order, the war was resumed on both sides with new ardour.

Paris received the unwelcome tidings concerning Orleans before it had satisfactorily accounted for its own failures in the great sorties of November 30 and December 2. Outside Paris the officers and men of the German army were comparing their experiences of the recent hard fighting, and speculating on its probable results. On the 4th of December, the Correspondent at the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Saxony (formerly the Correspondent at Metz) wrote from *Le Vert Galant* :—

Leaving Chelles this morning, I rode through several villages in the direction of Margency, a spot I have almost learned to consider my home, when between Aulnay and Le Blanc Mesnil I met the Head-quarter

Baggage Column, headed by the Quartermaster-General.

His tidings were that the Crown Prince's head-quarters had been removed this morning to Le Vert Galant, and that Prince George was to stand fast in Champs. This arrangement was temporary, as he hoped, while the troubles lasted in the region of the peninsula of which I have written so much. After the threatening symptoms there had subsided, a reversion to the old positions was to take place. This information naturally sent me back to Le Vert Galant, where, sure enough, I found the Crown Prince located in the château—far and away a meaner château than that of Margency—and whither the larger portion of his staff had accompanied him. When I arrived, a placid breakfast was in progress, nothing occurring to disturb the mid-day meal. I breakfasted in Chelles with Major von Schoenberg and the Staff of the 103rd Regiment (Saxons). While breakfast was proceeding, it was suddenly announced that the whole 23rd Division, of which the 103rd form a part, was to cross the Marne. No destination was announced. They might go to Noisy, under the terrible fire; they might relieve the Würtembergers in the hardly less dangerous Villiers; or it might be their lot to occupy the splendid château of the wealthy soapboiler in Champs. Nobody knew, but the movement looked like fighting. Before coffee was served, however, there arrived a couple of lieutenants of the 108th Regiment, come to take up quarters for the regiment, and bringing the announcement that the whole of the 24th Division was under orders to take the positions of the 23rd on the north side of the Marne. The anticipations of an immediate renewal of the combat subsided on this intelligence—all that was in progress was merely an outer change of quarters, and the relief of a division that had suffered very much on the 2nd instant.

But to return to the château at Chelles, and to the two sprightly young lieutenants of the 108th, who came there to choose quarters for their brother officers. The youngest of them, a boy of about nineteen, had rare luck on the 2nd. By the doctrine of chances he should have been on the look-out for a grave, not for quarters. In the short skirts of his tunic were four bullet-holes, his left shoulder-strap was severed and hung in fringes from another bullet, and he had no knee on the left leg of his overalls—the piece had been torn clean out by the fragment of a shell. The young rascal walked lame from the latter casualty, but otherwise he was as sound as a bell, and to see him tackle a yard of “wurst” was a caution. While our young friends were talking with Major von Schoenberg about quarters, there dropped in the representative of another regiment on the same errand. I was an auditor of the interview. It was too good not to be narrated. Representative of incoming regiment: “You have here a beautiful place, Herr Major, with a fine *Speise saal* and a grand piano. This will suit well our Herr Oberst.” Herr Major Schoenberg: “Oh yes, and many grenades come into the garden. That will furnish a pleasant accompaniment to the piano.” As if to confirm the Major’s words, whiz—bang, came a shell from Mont Avron, and lit right in front of the window, sending the pellets of frozen mud right through the glass. The Major grinned a dry grin. His sympathy had been enlisted as regards quarters in favour of the young lieutenants. The formal staff-officer hesitated. Whiz, bang, another shell—this time on the roof. He looked still more undecided. Then up came the doctor of the 103rd, and recounted how the shells yesterday had interfered with him. This was enough for our friend. He left the field to the young lieutenants, and went in search of quarters less exposed.

As I jogged out of Chelles, on the way to Montfermeil, I met the whole of the 1st Infantry Guard Regiment. This was the *avant courier* of a whole division of the Guards, including the Artillery, pressing on to occupy Chelles and the vicinity. I trust the movement, and those movements along the whole line of which this was but a detail, do not augur anything more than a design to strengthen the position across the dangerous peninsula in such a manner as to negative whatever advantage the French may ostensibly derive from their occupation of Brie, Champigny, and the peninsula in the rear of these villages. As I rode out of Chelles, the shells—how similar are the two names!—came pounding into it vigorously. The French must have seen the movement of the troops, and thought to inconvenience it with their long-range artillery. A German battery on a bluff between Chelles and Montfermeil might have attempted a reply, but Mont Avron was allowed to have it all its own way. The only casualty, so far as I know, which the fire produced was to startle a pair of fine grey horses which, with a carriage behind them, were coming down the steep slope out of Montfermeil. Off they tore at a furious gallop, kicking the splinter bar to bits, and utterly ignoring the frantic zeal with which the driver tugged at the reins. They dashed through a company of Guards, routing with ignominy a section which had taken up the road, bayonets levelled, with intent to stop them. The driver jumped out here, and alighted safely on the top of a soldier. The horses galloped on, strewing the road with portmanteaus, cigar-boxes, a mattress, and other contents of the carriage, which was rapidly going to pieces. At length, still pursuing the same headlong pace, they vanished round a corner, and their ultimate fate I know not.

Forty years ago there could have been few finer residences round Paris than a certain château which need not be named, but which is situated on the plain somewhere between Gagny and Ville Evrart. The railway came and infringed on its amenities, but not to any great extent, the noble old trees acting as a screen to the track. Later came the Germans, and they bedevilled the amenities, far worse than the railway. War time is a bad season for trim grass-plots, painted staircases, and luxurious carpets. Then, last of all, came shells from Mont Avron, over the way, and played old gooseberry with the amenities that still kept up a self-assertion in the face of the hostile occupation. The hour is midnight. A huge wood fire is blazing in the noble drawing-room of this mansion. In a comfortable arm-chair on one side of this fire sits a middle-aged lieutenant, opposite him an individual in civilian attire. The two are drinking grog, and chatting as they drink. They are old friends. They knew each other a dozen years ago in Luneburg, that dullest of all dull Hanoverian cities, when as yet King George, the pious, the blind, and the obstinate, reigned in Hanover, and annexation was only dimly apprehended by far-sighted people, who—such is the lot of the sapient—were put down as theorists and alarmists. The middle-aged lieutenant had fought in six-and-sixty in the army of his monarch, and when the evil day came he, with some eighty comrades, transferred his services to Saxony, in preference to remaining in an army which thenceforth was to be merely a Prussian Army Corps. The talk is of the old days in Luneburg, of pleasant rides by the banks of the Ilmenau, of rowing excursions up to Rothensleuser, of naughty scampers to Hamburg, of those pretty English girls that stole the hearts of a couple of regiments of infantry, of the old Waterloo major that lived by

the waterside, of certain sensational steeplechases and memorable mess dinners. Unto these two there enters Under-officer Schultz. Schultz is a Saxon, but utterly unlike the bulk of his countrymen. Schultz would make an excellent study for an artist anxious to limn a Cameronian or one of Cromwell's Ironsides. His name might be Praise-the-Lord-Barebones. Tall, gaunt, thin-flanked, and square-shouldered, with high cheek-bones, and a lofty, narrow forehead, Under-officer Schultz enters, and bringing his heels together with an audible clank, stands bolt upright and motionless. "Well, Schultz?" asks the lieutenant. "Herr Lieutenant, the patrol is ready," replies Schultz, with solemn curtness. Herr Lieutenant bolts the heeltap of his grog, rises, tightens his sword-belt, feels for his little friend the six-chambered revolver, puts on his cloak and helmet, pulls up his long boots, and is ready. The civilian's preparations are simpler, since he has no arms to see to. Out into the night air. "Der Teufel! what a beastly night." It was frosty in the morning, and now it rains a drizzly rain. The wet has mingled with the frost, and the ground is at once slippery and sticky. It will be dirty and heavy walking to-night, that is clear. There is a moon, but the sky seems as muddy as the earth, and her rays serve only to impart a dirty white tinge to the fine drizzling rain. The patrol—three sturdy Saxon soldiers—are standing motionless in the gloom, the red cigar-tips showing dimly through the rime. "March!" says the lieutenant. Schultz takes his place in front of the patrol, and behind the lieutenant and his companion, and away goes the little party, slipping and stumbling down the tree-shadowed avenue. They traverse about half an English mile of flat country, crossed by numerous walls and fences, enclosing fields and the grounds surrounding châteaux. The way is winding

and the road horrible. There is no life in this tract, till lately inhabited by wealthy Parisians. Somewhere about is a new château, not quite finished, belonging to the great French surgeon, Nelaton. But the masons and carpenters have stopped their work, and are now in the Garde Mobile, and the doctor is certainly not at home. Suddenly the ground begins to rise. The party are climbing the steep slope of a hill. That hill is Mont Avron. There is no road, only a rough track through the shaggy copsewood. At every second step somebody is on his hands and knees; now stumbling over a stump, now losing his foot-hold in the mud with the frost-hardened substratum. The hill-track winds and wriggles, but it is always upward, and that steeply too, so that the breathing comes harder and shorter. Suddenly there comes a smothered "Halt!" from vigilant Under-officer Schultz, that curious pitch of the voice in full development that is the characteristic of Saxon-German, and that reminds one so much of the "twang" of the fisher-folk in the villages on the Moray Firth. Under-officer Schultz has not called "Halt!" for nothing; his quick ear has detected coming footsteps. "Dodge behind the thick brushwood there," is the sharp-whispered order of Herr Lieutenant. The party is off the track in a twinkling, hiding like a Fenimore Cooper's Indian, the civilian, in particular, squatting like a rabbit. The movement was not an instant too soon. The sound of the footsteps and voices comes nearer and nearer. There is a medley of jabber, everybody speaking together in shrill French. "A patrol of *Francs-tireurs*," whispers the Lieutenant. A nice patrol party truly, doing their work with that silent vigilance and caution which the duty essentially calls for. Pop! a gun goes off. Have the jabberers spotted the lurkers in the wood? If so, the thought occurs to one of them that a certain worthy

woman in a certain little island across a certain Channel has a remarkably strong chance of being a widow in the course of a few minutes. Tut! the apprehension was ludicrous. One of the Francs-tireurs had fired off his piece in mere lightness of heart. Probably he shot into the air. Stern Under-officer Schultz gives a snort of contempt, and mutters between his teeth, "*dummer Kerl*."

The Franc-tireur patrol has passed, and the squatters get up from their muddy position, and stumble onward and upward. They are near the top of the hill now. A light is visible through the undergrowth of scrub, and there is a halt. The light is the watch-fire of a French picket. There is a sentry posted, who has his back to the forest and his face to the fire, such a position affording him full opportunities for the exercise of vigilance. What is he doing now? Under-officer Schultz gives another snort of contempt as the sentry stacks his piece against a tree, walks up to the fire and has a drink, taking a good long warm before he comes back. All the picket are drinking. Some seem tolerably on towards drunkenness, judging by the clatter of loud voices. Above, on the flat summit of the hill, is the battery. It is evident that there is another watch-fire inside it. The earthwork looks three ways, and seems to have six guns mounted on each face. It is the latest construction of the besieged. It has only been in operation for about ten days, and it is an abominably mischievous affair. There are no movements or signs of movements in the vicinity. This ascertained, the patrol takes its weary way back to the château. Getting down the hill is worse than it was getting up. How welcome is the wood fire in the drawing-room! Herr Lieutenant and the civilian look at each other, and simultaneously burst into a fit of laughter. They are plastered with mud from head to

foot. Under-officer Schultz, who is muddier than either—for his nose seems to have been rooting in red clay—stands by as solemn as a mute at a funeral. He gets an order, goes right about face as by machinery, and disappears. Grog and cigars in the arm-chairs.

Champs, Dec. 6.—The troubles seem over in this quarter, at any rate for the time. The Crown Prince yesterday paid a second visit to his brother, and an informal council of war was held; the faces at which wore a much more cheerful expression than those which surrounded Prince George's table on the night of the 2nd instant. There was reason for the good spirits. The French have lost heart, or have determined to concentrate their efforts in some other direction. Yesterday morning it was found that they had not only evacuated Brie and Champigny, but had wholly abandoned the peninsula, and broken or withdrawn the bridges over which they had crossed on to it. This operation was performed under a very heavy fire from Mont Avron and Fort Nogent, which impeded the Würtembergers not a little in their occupation of the vacated villages. Several were killed and wounded in the course of the morning. Towards afternoon the fire was renewed at a longer range—at a longer range, indeed, than it was believed any guns in Paris could carry—and this fire, after a lull in the evening, was renewed in the night. There were, however, no demonstrations of infantry, and a shell-fire from the forts is what may be expected and submitted to with as good a grace as may be. It is true that while it lasts it makes Champs rather unpleasant quarters. It may be asked, then, why I should have returned hither, when the Crown Prince's staff, to which I am attached, has returned to Margency this forenoon, and when Prince George has gone back to his old quarters at Le Vert

Galant? The explanation is, that I have a keen anxiety to become more familiar with the topographical features of a locality which will be memorable as the theatre of what was really a great battle. My purpose will be considerably facilitated by the circumstance that the engineer and artillery staffs of the Maas Army * have not accompanied the Prince in his return to Margency, but come down here to Champs. This is at once a pleasure and advantage. Lieut.-Colonel Oppermann, Major Hoffmann, and Lieutenant Hoffmann, are gentlemen of thorough professional knowledge, and it has been my fortune, since the first day of my connection with the Maas Army, to share the society and the quarters of the first and last officers. If there is nothing of interest in the region of Champs, or nothing threatening to occur to the south of it, a return to Margency is practicable at very short notice.

Having only been here an hour, I have not yet had time to go over the battle-field, which, however, I understand presented a spectacle testifying to the stubborn valour of the Saxons and Würtembergers. There lay whole ranks, I am told, cold in death, the bodies of men who did not know the meaning of the verb to run away, and who stood on the slopes of the "weinberg" exposed to that terrible fire, concerned for nothing but that the French should not succeed in their object. To-day many of the brave dead have found a soldier's grave. That the corpses lay there in the face of day so long is owing to the conduct of the French. What wanton devilry could stimulate officers commanding artillery to fire on burial parties I do not pretend to

* Army of the Meuse—or Maas—was the designation given to the Fourth Army, formed and placed under the orders of the Crown Prince of Saxony, when Marshal MacMahon took the field with the army he had organized at Châlons.

be able to conceive; but this is certain, that men with the spade and not the rifle on the shoulders were yesterday slain by the fire from the forts, and became themselves claimants for the graves which they came to dig for others. Nor was the fire occasional. It might then have been a mistake. A steady fire was maintained throughout the morning, and it seemed, according to my information, that deliberate aim was taken even at individuals.

The loss, as now ascertained, is greater than in my letter, written on the evening of the action, I ventured to anticipate. Writing then, I was specially cautious not to overshoot the mark—exaggeration on such points savours either of bunkum or of nervousness—but I think it must have been apparent that I apprehended a more severe loss than that which I allowed myself specifically to indicate. The latest figures (and these do not pretend to be definite) give the loss of the Würtembergers at forty officers and 1,500 rank and file killed and wounded, and the Saxon loss at seventy-six officers and 2,000 rank and file killed and wounded. I am unable to state whether these figures include the “missing,” and the question is an interesting one. “Missing” means a prisoner. Now it is certain that in the open the French took no prisoners. A little mystery envelopes the doings in the villages, which it is not easy to penetrate, and one must resort to collateral and circumstantial evidence, if he can find it. Prisoner statistics are always a good test. If you choose to say that you evacuated a village because you found it untenable, the euphemism may be allowed to you; but if I learn that you had to leave behind you certain wounded men, which fell into the enemy’s hands—and, it may be, sound men, who had to lay down their arms per force of circumstances—I am at liberty to put my own construction on your little periphrase.

I was witness yesterday, in La Vert Galant, of a scene full of pathos. The 107th Regiment had marched in on the previous night and taken up quarters. In the morning came on what the field-post had for the regiment in a large waggon. The waggon drew up at each battalion orderly room, and the bugle sounded the rally. It was a curious medley that streamed out as the tail-board of the waggon was let down. The German field-post is an elastic institution, and I think if you chose to send one out a box-mangle, or a live tiger in its cage, there would be no objections on the score of bulk. There streamed down cigar-boxes, wrapped in canvas, long shapeless rolls that were eloquent of "wurst," flabby packets that one might swear contained underclothing, and little boxes that rolled as they fell, and evidently contained thalers. The pile was made against the wall, the sergeant cleared a space and commenced on the pile, letter by letter, packet by packet. I made a note of the responses to the first six names, and simply transcribe it: "Schumann?" "Todt" (dead). "Kaspar?" "Verwundet." "Schultz?" "Weg." "Stolberg?" "Todt." "Schrader?" "In Paris." "Bergmann?" "In Lazareth." Thus proceeded the dreary roll-call. It was that of the 2nd battalion, which has suffered most severely. Before the sergeant had done there was quite a heap of packets which their owners will never claim. The number of "Wegs" was surprising. "Weg" is a wide word. It may mean anything; prisoner, missing, unburied, deserted (but I never heard of a German soldier deserting). The sum of it is—"Not here; and the Lord knows where he is." "In Paris," was not an uncommon response, but always with a laugh.

Dec. 8.—The French in Paris do not appear to have lost heart on account of their reverses in the Orleans quarter.

General von Moltke took particular care that the evil tidings should be communicated in detail to General Trochu, who does not appear to have kept them to himself, in imitation of the conduct of Bazaine at Metz. At all events, as I learned this afternoon from the headquarters of General Obernitz at Malnove, an intimation from the French Commander-in-Chief has appeared in the Paris papers, proclaiming that the Orleans news has not in the slightest degree altered the conditions of the siege of Paris; that his business and duty are to defend Paris, and this alone; and that he means to do so to the very uttermost. There is an absence of bunkum about this announcement which forces one to believe in it. From the conviction that Trochu will allow no outside circumstances to influence him, to the consideration of the expediency of a bombardment, is a natural step. I yesterday mentioned that I have some reason to think the German tactics are altered, and that you will ere long hear of the commencement of the bombardment. Without being able to give definite confirmation to this impression to-day, I can only say that all I hear tends in that direction. I have even heard the day for the commencement of the bombardment definitely named—the 12th instant, but I must expressly guard against the supposition that this statement has been made in official circles. I am living here in the midst of the men in whose hands are all the dispositions in the contingency of a bombardment; but I must do the gentlemen in question the justice to say, that they keep a secret, if secret there be, with a strictness which I thoroughly respect. To my direct questions on the subject, I have received the manly and straightforward reply, that on this point I must not ask for information, and this is enough for me.

This afternoon two deserters were brought in to the

Württemberg divisional head-quarters in Malnoue. They had come from Noisy-le-Roi, had traversed the space between Forts Nogent and the Marne, and had crossed the river somewhere below Brie. They mentioned the construction on the slope in front of Nogent of a battery mounted with guns of twelve centimètre calibre, and stated that the vicinity was full of infantry. While riding to-day, I met a Hamburg merchant driving full pelt to the railway at Lagny in a state of panic. He was full of a story that the siege of Paris was to be raised at once, in consequence of the interception of a balloon from Paris containing a despatch from Trochu, to the effect that he meant to gain Versailles at any cost. The King, according to the panic-stricken Hamburger, was off to Rheims to-night with half the army, and the Crown Prince was to be left behind to fight his way out, covering His Majesty's retreat. Poor man! in the recesses of that deep waggon of his lay, it may be, a good deal of ill-gotten gear, and it might have been a troubled conscience which made his apprehensions so causelessly active. This forenoon I rode over to a large field Lazareth of wounded, which the Würtembergers have at Pontault, a place to the south of Malnoue. Originally there were about 350 wounded brought here; but, in pursuance of the usual policy, all have been sent towards Germany, with the exception of those cases which are too severe to bear removal. Of these there remain about 120, including a considerable number of amputations. It is the critical time with these amputation cases—the third or fourth day—when the ligatures are prone to come away and great effusions of blood recur. In addition to the very bad cases, consisting of Würtembergers chiefly, with a few Frenchmen and men of the 2nd Army Corps, there are in the place about eighty Frenchmen,

too severely wounded for the French to remove them from the field, and who were brought in by the Würtemberger ambulances. The Mayor of Noisy, a neighbouring village, has volunteered to take these poor fellows off the hands of the Würtemberg medical men, giving his personal guarantee for them as prisoners of war. In most of the cases the Mayor's guarantee was quite superfluous. Unless the war lasts far longer than any one expects, not many of these will be very formidable men for many a day after its termination. One word as to the Würtemberg field ambulances, which are admirable vehicles for their purpose. The hinder end contains places for four wounded men on stretchers, which are run in from the rear—two on the lower tier, two above. The front part is a kind of double coupé, comfortably padded and seated for six men not so severely wounded as to necessitate a recumbent position. The sides are well screened, while at the same time free ventilation is secured. The body of the waggon is mounted on capital springs, and four good horses, with mounted drivers, ensure rapid conveyance to the Lazareth. The Würtembergers have special wounded trains of their own, which have been employed in despatching their men from Lagny to Würtemberg. The American construction of railway carriage is in use in Würtemberg, and it is easy to conceive the facilities for the conveyance of wounded afforded by this build. I learn from the Prince of Saxe-Weimar, that one of those trains was inspected by our army medical representatives at the seat of war, Inspector-General Innes and Dr. Becker. The representatives of another of our institutions, the British National Society, put in a most opportune appearance both at Pontault and Noisiel, another large Lazareth in this neighbourhood. Four fourgons arrived from Meaux on the 4th instant, under

the direction of Captain Brackenbury; and Dr. Biberstein, the chief of the medical staff, spoke with enthusiasm of the business-like manner in which the British fourgons were able to fulfil his requisitions, which he said were both large and various. The British Society beat the Berliner Hülfsverein this journey. Active men as the almoners of the latter are, they only put in an appearance at Pontault yesterday.

While the doctor and myself were having a gossip before making a tour of the Lazareth, the Prince of Saxe-Weimar came to visit the wounded Württembergers. He is married to a daughter of the King of Württemberg, and has been commissioned by his parents-in-law to this kindly duty. The Prince is a big man: all the Saxe-Weimars run large. Prince Edward—our Guardsman—loomed almost gigantically through the fog on the morning of Inkermann. The Prince has a heart certainly big in proportion to his corporal bulk. Sad as were the sights the wards presented, it was a pleasant peregrination which I made round them in his company. The Prince went round with a box of cigars under his arm. With each man in turn he had a little conversation, which always ended in the question, "Can you smoke?" The affirmative response was all but universal. One or two poor fellows there were who seemed past caring for the cigar—past the power of speech, indeed. All that they could do was to look grateful for the Prince's kindly words. One bright-eyed young fellow replied so warmly, "Ach, Ja, euere Hoheit!" The doctor shook his head, the boy was in the fever, and a cigar might not be the best thing in the world for him. But he pleaded so hard, that the good doctor relented, and let him have the grateful weed. Another chap would have the Prince see the piece of shell that had made a hole in him.

"In the cupboard" he directed the orderly. The cupboard was searched, but it could not be found, and the doctor would have the Prince pass on. But he would not, and by-and-by the bit of shell turned up in the wounded man's waistcoat pocket. There were two men who had each lost a leg, with whom the Prince had specially interesting conversations. One was a stalwart, hairy, under-officer. He was one of three brothers, and now all were wounded in this war. And was he married? No; but there was an old woman in some street or other in Stuttgart, and now that all her sons were down it might be bad times with her. The other "amputated" was a mere boy, handsome as a statue. I don't know whether it has struck others as it has me, that there are a great number of classically beautiful men among the Würtembergers. This lad was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. In both cases the Prince's hand went into his pocket, and came out with a gold piece. "Here, my man, send that to the mother, and let her know it comes from the Queen." In one ward were two amputation cases—one was a Frenchman, the other a Würtemberger. Both had burst out bleeding, and the orderlies were busy around them, pressing femoral arteries, picking up veins, and applying ice. The Frenchman was shrieking and yelling; the German lay silent, the drops of cold sweat on his forehead, and the muscles of his face working, but never a cry came from him. The spectacle illustrated one of the differences between the two nationalities. As he quitted each room, the Prince said a few simple words to the effect that he was commissioned by the King and Queen of Würtemberg to visit the wounded, and to thank them for their exertions on behalf of their country. The words, I fancy, and the visit did more good than any physic Dr. Biberstein could exhibit.

All the occupants of this Lazareth are wounded men ; there have been a few cases of typhus, but they have been sent to the rear. To quote the dry professional remark of Dr. Biberstein, " We have no time for typhus here."

From the other side of the circle of investment, from Versailles, the Special Correspondent at the Royal headquarters wrote, on the 4th of December :—

The palace hospital has been nearly empty of late, for most of the patients brought in when the Prussians first arrived have either died or got well enough to travel home, and a large number of the wounded of October 21 have been similarly taken to the railway line or to the great burial mound in the cemetery. There is a good deal of sickness, you may suppose, among such a crowd of soldiers. But, despite the rainy weather of last month and the severe cold which has now set in, I hear that the German troops continue to be in excellent health. They suffer from the cold, are drenched and made dismal by the rain, yet nevertheless they continue to be, as a body, well up to their work. More warm clothing would be an advantage to them, and the authorities are taking steps to supply the want, but it will not be possible to serve out so many sheepskin coats and blankets of extra thickness as days like yesterday and to-day seem to require.

The bitter weather which has ushered in the month of December must cause great suffering to the millions of Paris, with the known scarcity of fuel, and it makes the poverty of the surrounding country pinch all the more sorely. I have spoken of this poverty before. It has drawn forth the appeal of the Bishop of Versailles and his clergy to foreign charity ; it has brought people of sufficient means in peace time to a state of destitution,

and has opened a prospect of wretchedness for the coming winter which may appal the stoutest heart. No blame is laid in the Bishop's simple statement on any one in particular. The fact of the war is accepted as a starting point, and the incidents of suffering which it has caused are mentioned that, if possible, they may be relieved. Take, for example, the pensioners and other such persons of every degree, who have lived in the suburbs of the capital; take the cottagers turned adrift by the necessity of siege operations—many of them have become homeless by shells fired by their own countrymen—or consider how many artisans are thrown out of employ at the present time. We need not press the point of war losses, by requisition and contribution, to arrive at a total of suffering very hard to grapple with. The mere taking round of a pittance to those who have "known better days," as we phrase it, would be a work of unspeakable relief to hundreds whose cases have only to be known at home to meet with instant sympathy. They do not suffer because they have fallen from wealth to narrow means, but because from a life just tolerable, on a pension or an annuity, a life of rigid economy and small outlay, they have come to the verge of actually starving. I have been told of an aged gentleman, a member of one of the best families in France, who was lately found shivering over a scrap of fire with only money enough to buy bread, and not much of even that.

The great successes of the Germans on the Loire may bring the struggle abruptly to an end. But even then, in a case by no means certain to occur, there will be the mass of poverty and distress round about Paris needing help as sorely as the distress of the capital itself. We ought to have food and fuel ready for them in abundance, if we wish to save our neighbours at the last pinch.

Dec. 5.—The second capture of Orleans by the Germans has been a ruinous affair for the Army of the Loire. If we make every allowance for the elastic energy of M. Gambetta, and for the zeal of the provinces, we have still an end for the time to all hope that Paris can be relieved. The Parisians must fight their own battle through the bitter winter weather, and must be quick in fighting it, too, or the besiegers will be reinforced by some of the German troops now on the Loire. We have been watching daily for a sortie such as has not been yet attempted, for a coming out *en masse* of all who wish to leave the city, and for the decisive battle of the siege somewhere near Boisy St. Leger. We have seen the weak point of the German line gradually strengthened until it has become the strongest point of all; have seen Trochu waited for with astounding completeness of preparation. He had a chance on the night of the 30th ultimo of breaking through towards the south-east, and getting away from Paris with some of his army. On the 1st instant there was still a possibility of bearing down the Würtembergers and their supports, for I do not think that the French in escaping on that day would have had to deal with one-half the number of Germans who now bar their passage. The delay may have arisen from internal causes, depending, I mean, on the state of Paris. But if it arose from a wish to hear the guns of D'Aurelle de Paladine thundering in the distance before the blow was struck from the capital, it was a fatal delay. Events have supplied us with a whole battery of after-wisdom on the subject, and a glance at the line of country to be passed over when the French shall finally come forth would discourage the stoutest of them.

In the bright hard weather which we have had for some days, it is not disagreeable to ride and walk about at noon, or even to walk briskly after the sun has set;

but to bivouac on the frozen ground must be chilly work indeed. The ruined villages to the south-east of Paris are full of armed men, the roads are blocked with waggon-trains that supply food and forage, whilst long columns of cavalry may be seen winding towards the threatened spot. It is easy to go and easy to return on the hard-ringing horse-tracks through the fields, though the roads themselves are more like petrified furrows than anything else. It is easy to move over the ground now, but not easy to live on the probable scene of action. There is a scarcity of accommodation even for the wounded, and a difficulty about stabling, which presses much more in winter time, as you may well suppose. Horses are brought into deserted parlours, and window-curtains torn down to form coverlets for the men. Furniture is obliged to be used as fuel, where it is of combustible stuff; and, in a word, this concentration of troops makes the besiegers suffer a good deal. They are tough fellows, accustomed to cold weather at home, and they have no lack of food, or it would go hard with them: One of the defects of the system of campaigning without tents and trusting to village quarters is, that when troops must crowd together there is, naturally, no place for the extra regiments, and they have to bivouac. What surprises me with the Prussians is, not that so many sleep under the wintry sky, but that such a number of them are stowed away in every possible and impossible hole and corner of a village. They have a talent for quartering themselves which cannot be surpassed.

And now that relief is hurled back beyond the Loire, if not rendered utterly hopeless, Paris stands once more alone, as she stood in September and October last. The great city and the great army round it are waiting for the end of the food on which the city lives. There

is a probability of desperate fighting, but very little probability that the garrison will cut its way through. If it did, there would be then only a question of political consequences, not of military honour, to decide. Paris might surrender the next day with perfect satisfaction, and the war might become all the fiercer to the southward. This is what the Germans wish to prevent. They are so sure of victory that they desire to catch as many Frenchmen as possible.

Things have been quiet to-day, save for stray cannon-shots along the front. The French are said to have massed a large force on the oval within the great bend of the Marne, at and behind La Varenne, and they still hold Champigny, which was supposed to have been recovered on Friday morning. The fact is that, though driven in from some of the ground they seized on the 30th ultimo, they yet maintain two or three important points. Champigny, for instance, is a species of *tête de pont* to the position on the oval of La Varenne.

The garrison of Paris and the investing army were now equally impatient of the protracted siege, and each persuaded itself that it was the business of the other to put an end to a situation which grew more insupportable every day. The Correspondent at the King of Prussia's head-quarters wrote on the 17th of December:—

If I tell you of rumours of another French sortie, I am but repeating the familiar tale of this hereafter-to-be-famous siege. It is not "Going! going! gone!" as with an auctioneer, but "Coming! coming! come!" in regard to Trochu's men—only that the "come!" has fallen short in its effect up to this time. They have made brave efforts; but to come out of the charmed circle is just what they cannot manage. I can do no more than repeat that the Germans are

ready, and that the French will have terribly hard work to break away. We hear no firing to-day, but that may be by reason of the wind. Some talk of an immediate attack by the besiegers on the French outworks as all but decided upon—in which case there would be plenty of noise, and plenty of loss too, between the rival artillerists; others hold to their theory that all the German work will be waiting and watching, and repulsing sorties, should any more be made. When I consider the present proportion between the strength of Paris as a fortress and the food for Paris as a city, it strikes me that an attack could only be made to satisfy the besieging troops, and not with the hope of greatly hastening the end.

That complete isolation of the two millions of people round whom the Germans have circled, is the danger most to be feared. Those deserted highways, and rusty rails, of which I spoke to you in a former letter, are significant of the strict blockade. Fancy Clapham Junction without a single train in the twenty-four hours, the gallant lads at the besiegers' outposts sitting behind barricades on the Old Kent Road, and the Camden Town goods station turned into a barrack. Fancy, by such analogies, the fatal belt about Paris. No stream of market carts, no milk trains, no cattle trains enter within the walls, and yet the daily consumption of everything must be enormous. When all has been eaten which is fit for food, and much that men would ordinarily shrink from, there will remain nothing for Paris but submission, unless General Trochu can raise the siege. If it were wise in the beginning for Count Moltke to wait and watch, it would seem still to be so. There is little likelihood of trouble at present from the Army of the Loire, and little doubt but that the German reinforcements will keep

pace with the strengthening of Trochu's army by constant drill.

The different scenes upon my journey round the city make up a picture of this stirring time not soon to be forgotten. Here is an outpost watching the south of Paris from the high ground to the right of Meudon. The men are Bavarians, and their crested helmets look somewhat the worse for wear. They have made themselves comfortable behind a ruined wall, which serves partly to keep away the wind, partly to hide them from the French gunners. It is evident that shells have become matters of course to them; for, though they jump under cover and crouch down when the whizzing sound is heard in the air, they resume their former employment, whatever it may have been, as soon as the danger has passed. There is just a chuckle over *die Franzosen*, who are declared to be stupid fellows to waste so much ammunition, and then feet are stamped or hands are thumped upon the breast, and we agree that it is bitter cold. These French shells do less mischief than the shells of the Germans, for, though they defonate and burst with loud explosion on reaching the ground, they are so made as to break into fewer fragments than the German shells, and thus they kill and wound fewer men, and the shivering men on watch laugh at them as engines of death. It would not be so, perhaps, if there were an object to fire at. A bombardment would give the French a chance of hitting somebody with their guns.

The deputation of the North German Parliament arrived last night to congratulate King William on the change of title which impends. There is almost as much of political black coat wearing to be seen in the hotel dining-rooms of Versailles, and at the corners of the streets, as of staff uniforms. The grave, sober gentlemen

in fur collars and spectacles are seemingly quite at home in the temporary capital of the new Empire.

Dec. 18.—A funeral occurred yesterday in Versailles a little unlike the ordinary run of funerals, from the Palace Hospital, yet with the form of procession that has become familiar to the inhabitants by the sad frequency of its repetition. There was the slow moving escort of Prussian infantry, and the solemn music of a Prussian band, leading the way to the grave. Then followed a coffin, which bore a tricolour flag, with the red cap and sword of a French officer, and many a laurel-wreath laid on it by friendly hands. The body of Lieutenant Godard, of the French 42nd Regiment, was carried to its last resting-place by a squad of *infirmiers*, who serve the wounded here among their foes. Persons of all sorts were present to do honour to the deceased. General von Voigts-Rhetz, Commandant of Versailles, walked sternly behind the coffin, in full uniform and wearing all his decorations; with him were German officers and French civilians, French officers, apparently prisoners, and the native officials of the town. M. Rameau, the Mayor, was to be seen close to the Prussian commandant, and a crowd of well-to-do townfolk attended in deep mourning. The young lieutenant had fallen badly wounded in the sortie of December 2, and after lingering in great agony for many days, had died in a village at some distance from Versailles. He belonged to one of the most respected families in the town, and his relatives had hastened over to soothe his last moments with their sorrowing care. Alas! he had suffered very bitterly, for he fell in such a place that it was not easy to get to him, and he lay, as I hear, from the 2nd to the 5th of December, in the severe cold which at that time prevailed, and the wonder is that he was alive when they finally brought him in, though his

legs were frozen, and he lingered for nearly a week before his release. It is but one case among many. Thousands have so suffered before Paris and on the banks of the Loire; but when the story is brought home to us by an instance of a particular person, it seems too horrible to be true. To lie there night after night, helpless and freezing, is a mournful end for all the hopes of a first campaign—a heavy price, but not too great a price, to pay for the safety of the Fatherland. How many Frenchmen and Germans have been gladly paying it during the past few days!

Lieutenant Godard was borne from the church to the cemetery, and was lowered into the grave in presence of a silent crowd. The funeral address was pronounced by a French medical officer, whose name I did not catch, and M. Rameau, the Mayor, added a word or two of the kind which in less stirring times might be deemed a formal exhortation to be a good citizen. But now-a-days the merest scrap of allusion to passing events is eagerly caught at, and the people round the grave could not suppress an indistinct cry of applause when such sentiments were uttered. There was, however, no further sign of feeling. Order was not disturbed, and the Prussians had no cause to regret the courtesy which they had shown to a fallen foe. The French would not, and could not, forgive them their invasion; but they might own that the sad fate of the young lieutenant had been pitied by those whom he was bravely opposing.

We had an arrival on Friday afternoon which caused no small sensation among the "Britishers" at Versailles. Not the deputation of the North German Parliament, bringing an address to King William; not the Queen's Messenger, bringing despatches to Mr. Odo Russell. Both deputation and Queen's Messenger have safely

arrived; but we had something more exciting to distract our thoughts at the particular time to which I have referred. It was a matter of arrest—a matter almost too comical to be believed, but very vexatious and offensive to the persons chiefly concerned. You are ready with a suggestion of the old, old story. "Correspondents arrested?" you inquire, with a cruel smile. Yes, truly, but that is not all, and it is not the old story by any means. When the prisoners were brought into Versailles on Friday afternoon, they were taken to the Hôtel de France, where are the headquarters of General von Voigts-Rhetz, and were quickly released at the intercession of General Walker, our military attaché. They were released on a promise to appear again if wanted, and were not wanted and did not appear again. The thing was a mistake, a gross blunder of the Prussian Commandant of Etampes, and there ought to have been no arrest at all. This is how it happened. Captain Keith Fraser, who had been doing good work for the wounded on the Loire, and two English correspondents, those of the *Illustrated London News* and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, were travelling from Orleans to Versailles, when they halted at Etampes to pass the night. Here they met Captain Hozier, the assistant to General Walker, in his mission with the Prussians, and here the whole party—including another gentleman who was with Captain Hozier—dined together at the hotel. There was something suspicious in this meeting of foreigners, something which must have aroused the Commandant's curiosity. From whatever cause he began to suspect, he ended by making what must have seemed a great haul. The foreigners were detained. Even Captain Hozier's presence, and his personal assurance that he knew the others to be the persons named in the passes which

they severally carried, did not satisfy the Commandant. He allowed Captain Hozier with his friend to proceed southward, after a day's delay, and he sent the three gentlemen bound to Versailles, northward, under an escort of dragoons. You may fancy that it was much more amusing to hear of their being roused up at 6 A.M., and having to start without their coffee because the escort was impatient, than it could possibly have been to them to experience the journey. No great harm was done, and we could laugh over the adventure with the victims when they were once more free. But the annoyance they had suffered was really too bad for men with their passports in order. *Surtout pas trop de zèle*, might well have been said to the Commandant of Etampes.

Not only are the members of the deputation from the German Parliament ready in Versailles to present their address to the King to-day, but the great change in the style and title of Germany, the change from a Royal to an Imperial crown, is expected to lead to a more brilliant gathering than has yet been seen at headquarters. Their Majesties of Saxony, and Bavaria, and Würtemberg may even arrive, and offer their congratulations in person to the future Emperor. It is strange that, with a mighty army of their Republican enemies so near at hand, the Germans should have a position which enables them to transact this matter in perfect calmness. "Alarms, excursions, to them enter Trochu and his army," would make a bad stage direction for the pageant, so the Germans in the outposts must keep vigilant watch.

Dec. 19.—That great avenue of the courtly city, with its leafless trees, and its side alleys trampled from grass to mud by many horse-hoofs, is becoming rich in German history. The history of the Prince's coming, and of the

warm dusty afternoon in October when King William drove to the Préfecture, may be set down among the events of the war. Generals-in-Chief must go to some new head-quarters with each forward march that they make, and there must be a certain interest in such moves as part of a great drama. But these conquering Germans are a nation on the march. Clerks and secretaries, Ministers of State, and Royal Dukes, follow the course of the campaign. Telegraph lines are laid down, military railways are organized, and the quarters of the Soldier King, for three months straight on end, will be looked back to as a German capital *in partibus*. The Préfecture on the great avenue of Versailles has seen many a diplomat come and go, has witnessed the arrivals and departures of those who negotiated the union of Germany, and has been visited again and again by the iron Chancellor in his ripening triumph. It needed but a Parliamentary deputation to fill in the historical picture of 1870. Grave, earnest representatives of the German people should come among the Princes and Generals to take part in the mighty work of the time—in a better work than that of punishing France—namely, that of uniting Germany. The punishment may or may not have a lasting effect, but the union of the “Fatherland” will be an “accomplished fact” long before the ruined French villages have been rebuilt.

The deputation of the North German Parliament, headed by Herr Simson, its veteran President, travelled leisurely to Versailles. At Strasburg, the deputies were entertained by Count Bismarck Bohlen, at a grand banquet of more than ninety covers. At Bar-le-Duc, the Bavarian soldiers, who had received a barrel of genuine Baierisches Bier, begged their North German friends the deputies to drink the Emperor's health in this characteristic

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beverage. Then came the arrival at Lagny, and the drive, in any and every sort of carriage, to Versailles. The deputies were not fortunate as sightseers when they passed along the south-east front of Paris, for no sortie took place to give them a taste of war. They reached head-quarters in safety, were to be seen "largely on hand," as it is expressed by Western men, at the Hôtel des Réservoirs, and were organized in procession yesterday afternoon to proceed to the Préfecture.

Vulgar little French boys stared at these new-come politicians without the respect which clanking swords and brass-topped helmets impose upon the young mind. But though I heard many sneers in the street at the odd equipages of *ces messieurs*, as they dashed by—conquered people will have their word about the conquerors—yet the tone of more serious Frenchmen seemed to be, "Do as you like. Have an Empire, or whatever else you choose; the thing is your affair, and," added one whom I heard, "we French have had enough of Empires for a long time."

The weather was fine, and a crowd had collected before the Préfecture. Over the centre of the building was the Prussian Royal standard—the black cross on a ground of gold and purple—and about the gateway were hundreds of curious Prussians, off duty, waiting to see the deputies pass. There was no music before the King's quarters, but a few cannon-shot heard booming from Paris brought home the strange realities of the scene. May this Empire be peace—as Napoleon's never was—though it is founded in the midst of war! Hark to the boom of the guns of those rash Republicans! What troubled days they may have in the future, even when the invaders have gone home! The German system seems to promise greater strength. There is to be one country and one flag for the land of so many

princes, for they waive their claims in favour of the greatest among them, and offer him an Imperial crown. Listen to the music of yonder detachment which marches down the avenue—no better time could be chosen to ask with brazen throat, “What is the German’s Fatherland?” The answer is ready.

Inside the Préfecture of Versailles is a handsome room filled with bright uniforms, with helmets, and ribbons, and crosses. The King stands near the fireplace, and the generals and princes, the deputies and staff officers circle round an open space where stands Herr Simson to read the address of the Parliament. Herr Simson has the faculty of being a Parliamentry leader. As such, in 1849, he offered an Imperial crown to the King of Prussia, the brother of King William. Events have ripened. Prussia is not now where she then was. See how proudly Bismarck glances round the brilliant circle! Listen as the Soldier King replies, with tones of deep emotion! He accepts what his countrymen desire him to accept. He is to be Emperor. But the title of King will be maintained as well, and the other higher title will not be assumed until the South German people have expressed the wish which South German princes have already made known.

The Special Correspondent with the Crown Prince of Saxony’s army saw the same deputation at Lagny, on the 20th of December, as it was returning to Germany, and thus describes the interview:—

Between Pomponne and Lagny I was amusing myself by noting the variety of railway lines from which the carriages composing a single reserve train had been drafted—Berg, Hanover, Taunus, Halle-Cassel, Westfalen, Saxe, and half a dozen more, when I observed a half troop of Blue Hussars on the other side of the

water coming at a trot down to the Kreys-brücke. The horsemen were followed by a string of carriages, which were closed up by another half troop of Dragoons. What could it mean? Was the King fulfilling the frantic prognostications of the Hamburg merchant, whose ravings I reported the other day, and flying to Rheims in twelve two-horse post-waggon? Had Trochu yielded himself up on the sly, and was he off to Wilhelmshöhe *via* Lagny and Bouillon, after the manner of his quondam Imperial master? Had the Crown Princess been on a flying visit to her Royal and gallant husband, and been warned out of Versailles by "Big Josceline?" How could I tell? None the more could I understand the *raison d'être* of the procession when the escort and the post-waggon came past me at a trot. I saw faces not wont to be seen on the war-path—faces grave with thought, attenuated by long watching over the midnight lamp—civilian faces and dresses in every carriage. Although I did not express myself audibly, I shared the sentiment of the honest Landwehrman in the gutter, who bluntly roared out to one of the postillions, "I wish you'd tell me who the devil you have got there?" The man's quaint coolness reminded me of an Ost Preussen *marketender*, who, passing during the memorable interview between the ex-Emperor and Bismarck after Sedan, bawled out lustily, "Where is that Napoleon?" The *cortège* whirled on, and I rode after it, but was accidentally so delayed that the waggon had discharged their freight in front of the Lagny Railway Station some time before I got there. Very hungry, and with a trust in the chapter of accidents, begotten of some experience, to purvey somehow the information I needed, I turned aside to the "officers' casino"—a modest eating-room, on the mess principle, established opposite the station. The place was full of the faces I

had seen in the carriages. The owners of the faces were hard at work—very. Sausage, ham, cold meat were disappearing with creditable rapidity; the wine gurgled from the bottles, and a silence reigned such as is wont to exist among very hungry men. No wonder that they were hungry: the thirty civilians I saw before me, in the fur coats, the fur caps, and some indeed in fur boots, one man with white moustaches, many of them with bald heads, and other signs and tokens of “grave and reverend seigneurs,” were the deputation of the North German Reichstag, who were on their way home from Versailles, after tendering to King William the crown and title of Emperor of Germany. It was a strange sight—no bad emblem of a nation which loves peace, while it never shuns righteous war. Here, in the low-browed, narrow room, waited on by soldiers in canvas undress, whose straw beds were visible in the kitchen, as the door stood open, interspersed with officers in uniform—here a general, there a lieutenant, the street in front crowded with the wounded of two nations and half a dozen principalities, its stones echoing to the din of galloping orderlies, to the rattle of *marketender* carts, and the roll of tumbrils; here sat the fathers in Israel, men wise in council—men famous in literature—men whose names are a tower of strength on every Bourse in Europe. When has a Parliament been seen on campaign before? I can recall no later instance than when the Council of the Covenant went with the Covenanting fighting men into the field—their own, too, fighting men. Truly this modern Parliament on campaign took to the *rôle* very kindly, to judge by the good knives and forks they played. Having the honour to be recognized by one of the members—Baron Rothschild, I was most courteously requested to take a seat at one of the tables. The Baron,

in urbanity and geniality, is a host in himself; at the same table sat the following members of the deputations:—President Simson, Landrath von Cranach, Dr. Weigel, Herr Puttkamer, Baron Nordeck, Count Hompesch, Herr von Sybel, and Herr Sombart. They told me, with much feeling, how the tears had trickled down King William's cheeks when the grandest proffer of the age was made to him. They expressed with hearty warmth their pleasure that, when the time came that William's son should reign in his stead, the Princess Royal of England should be Empress of Germany; and before Herr Director came to say that the train was ready, one toast was drunk, and in that all the room joined with acclamation—"Prosperity to Germany and England: may they ever be friendly!" Baron Nordeck it was who gave the toast. And then "the house adjourned" into the snug first-class carriages. I could not help being amused at the gentleman who was charged with the duty of settling the reckoning. It was stiff, unquestionably—164 thalers for a simple cold luncheon for 31 persons. No doubt the casino keeper would have replied to a complaint to the same effect as a Scotch change-house keeper is reported to have used to James VI.: "Ye dinna come this gate ilka day, your Majesty." Certainly it is not often that a Lagny *marketender* gets a chance of cutting into the purse of the German Reichstag. The paymaster was disposed to grumble, but I ventured to point out that it was all, so to speak, in the family, since the man was a German, and since Germany was paying the costs of the delegation—a view which the good deputy, perhaps, all the readier adopted, because his colleagues, getting through before him, were picking up all the best seats in the train. The deputation goes to-night as far as Epernay, where, in its corporate capacity, it breaks up. I was

forced to resist a very cordial invitation to accompany it as far as the city of Champagne, but my duties called me elsewhere. An officer who accompanied the delegation in an official capacity had with him a cage containing a Paris carrier-pigeon, which had been captured with its despatch, and which he was conveying home as a present to Princess Charles of Prussia, the sister of Queen Augusta.

Yesterday two hundred sailors passed through Lagny on their way to man the gunboats on the Loire, captured from the French. The men, who were mostly from Kiel and the vicinity, were in splendid spirits, and were fine specimens of bearded tars. The gunboats are to be used in further operations against the French on the Loire.

CHAPTER XV.

By the middle of December the Pigeon had come to be considered in Paris as a sacred bird. It was the boast of the investors that not a mouse could enter or leave Paris without their permission; but they could neither hinder the escape of pigeons from the beleaguered capital, nor wholly prevent the besieged from receiving communication from the world without. It was, however, the pigeon, and the pigeon only, that could carry from the departments into the capital messages over which the enemy could exercise no censorship or control. The pigeon carried under its wing the letter that raised the hopes of two millions of people, or plunged them in momentary despair; and one of the most plaintive of the laments that were sent from Paris was, "We have had no pigeon for eight days." It must, however, be admitted that this admirable bird did not always fulfil the expectations that had been formed of it. As the winter season advanced, and the days became shorter, the number of messages despatched, but not received, sensibly increased. It appeared that the birds avoided night-work, and would only fly as long as they could see their way. Thus it became necessary, in the south of France, to have them conveyed northwards, and let loose as near as possible to the capital, so that they might be sure to arrive before dark. When this precaution was omitted, they frequently went to roost, and forgot to

continue their journey on the following day. Some, it was found, had been beguiled on their way by the hospitality of rural dove-cots, and others fell a prey to the Prussian hawk, or the heedless sportsman. It was owing to some such cause, probably, that a message, which M. Gambetta sent from Bourges on the 14th of December, did not reach Paris before the 20th of that month. It was in the following terms:—

“GAMBETTA À JULES FAYRE ET TROCHU.

“*Bourges, Dec. 14.*

“During four days I have been here, occupied with Bourbaki, reorganizing the three Corps, 15th, 18th, and 20th, of the First Army of the Loire, severely cut up by the forced marches and heavy rains following the evacuation of Orleans. This work will take some four or five days more to complete.

“The positions occupied by Bourbaki cover both Nevers and Bourges.

“The other portion of the army, after the occupation of Orleans, retired on Beaugency and Marchenoir—positions which it has retained against all the efforts of Prince Frederick Charles, thanks to the great energy of General Chanzy, who seems *le véritable homme de guerre révélé par les dernières événements*.

“The army, composed of the 16th, 17th, and 21st Corps, and supported by all the forces of the West, according to the orders of General Trochu, executed an admirable retreat, with very heavy losses to the Prussians. Chanzy stole away by a movement turning Frederick Charles on the left bank of the Loire at Blois and Amboise. Chanzy is in perfect security, ready to take the offensive against . . . when his troops are rested, after having fought splendidly against superior numbers from the 30th November to the 12th December.

"You thus see the Army of the Loire is far from being destroyed, according to the lies of the Prussians. It is separated into two equal forces ready to operate, one on . . . the other . . . so as to march on . . ."

The Paris journals exulted over this excellent news, though none of them ventured to explain it. The Besieged Resident wrote:—"The optimists say it means that Bourbaki and Chanzy have surrounded Frederick Charles; the pessimists say that Frederick Charles has got between them."

The King of Prussia had anticipated it by a few days in the following General Order:—

"Soldiers of the Confederate German Armies!—We have again arrived at a crisis of the war. When I last addressed you, the last of the hostile armies which at the commencement of the campaign confronted us had, by the capitulation of Metz, been destroyed. The enemy has since, by extraordinary exertions, opposed to us newly-formed troops, and a large portion of the inhabitants of France have forsaken their peaceful, and by us unhindered, vocations in order to take up arms. The enemy was frequently superior to us in numbers, but you have nevertheless again defeated him, for valour and discipline and confidence in a righteous cause are worth more than numerical preponderance. All attempts of the enemy to break through the investment lines of Paris have been firmly repulsed, often, indeed, with many bloody sacrifices, as at Champigny and at Le Bourget, but with a heroism such as you have everywhere displayed towards him. The armies of the enemy, which were advancing from every direction to the relief of Paris, have all been defeated. Our troops, some of whom only a few weeks ago stood before Metz and Strasburg, have to-day advanced as far as Rouen, Orleans, and Dijon, and, among many smaller victorious

engagements, two new important battles—those of Amiens and the several days' fight at Orleans—have been added to our former triumphs. Several fortresses have been conquered, and much war material has been taken. I have reason, therefore, for the greatest satisfaction, and it is to me a gratification and a duty to express this to you. I thank you all, from the General to the common soldier. Should the enemy persist in a further prosecution of the war, I know you will continue to show that exertion of all your powers to which we owe our great success hitherto, until we ring from him an honourable peace, worthy of the great sacrifices of blood and life which have been offered up.

“WILLIAM.

“*Head-quarters, Versailles, Dec. 6, 1870.*”

Although King William's language was fully warranted, M. Gambetta also had ground for the hopes he held out to Paris. It is true that, a week before the Parisians received the despatch, General Chanzy had retired to Le Mans, to repair his losses and reform his army; but his troops, nevertheless, had fought in a manner to deserve his commendations, and to justify the expectation that, under favourable circumstances, they would be able once more to resume their forward march. The *Moniteur* had announced that, “in consequence of the recent military events on the Loire and the evacuation of Orleans,” the Government had decided on the formation of two distinct armies, to operate in the two regions separated by the course of the river, “thus preserving means of effecting a junction with Paris, which was the immediate and supreme object in view.”

In accordance with these intentions, new appointments were announced. General Bourbaki was named commander-in-chief of the First, and General Chanzy commander-in-chief of the Second, Army of the Loire. The military events referred to in the official journal were sufficiently

obvious. Chanzy, with the 16th and 17th Corps, had been cut off from Orleans before the occupation of the city on the 4th of December, and compelled to retire clear of it to the south-west. The 18th and 20th Corps had gone up the river as Chanzy had gone down it, and the 15th Corps had retreated through Orleans upon Bourges, where subsequently the 18th and 20th Corps joined it, after a ten days' march. The formation of these Corps into two armies would have been a wise measure, had France had a generalissimo capable of combining their movements after the division of the general command. They had two several bases, south and west, each of which it was necessary to retain, and there was no reason why they should not act in concert. But, as we shall see, by the time that Bourbaki's army was in a condition to march, the "immediate and supreme object in view"—the "effecting of a junction with Paris"—was lost sight of. Bourbaki was sent away to the east, and Chanzy, so far from being able to go to Paris, was attacked and overthrown on the Sarthe.

The Ministers further announced the abandonment of Tours as the seat of the delegate Government, it being, under the circumstances of the hour, the most important point to prevent the freedom of the two armies from being impeded in any way whatever by political or administrative considerations. Therefore, as the proximity of the seat of Government at Tours might hinder the operations of the two armies, it had been decided that the whole of the Government offices should be transferred to Bordeaux, which, owing to the facilities of communication which it offered both by land and sea with the rest of France, afforded precious resources for the organization of the army and the continuance of the work of the national defence.

The Correspondent at Tours wrote from that city, on the 5th of December :—

M. Gambetta left Tours yesterday afternoon by a special train for Orleans. On arriving near the village of La Chapelle, about ten miles from Orleans, his train ran into a barricade which had been hastily thrown across the line by the enemy. At the same time some Uhlans lying in ambush fired upon him. He escaped almost by a miracle. He was very severely shaken by the shock of the collision with the barricade, and his private secretary, M. Spuller, was still more hurt. M. Gambetta got back on foot to Beaugency, where he took a carriage to Econis, in the hope of there getting some news from Orleans, but he could find none. He then made his way to Blois, where at nine yesterday evening he received from Tours, forwarded by M. de Freycinet, the following disheartening despatch:—

“I had hoped up to the last moment not to evacuate Orleans; but all my efforts were useless. I shall evacuate to-night.”

This laconic announcement reached Tours at half-past six last night, and was the only communication made by General d'Aurelle since the one six hours earlier, which promised that he would obey his orders and defend the place.

M. Gambetta returned to Tours at half-past three this morning, and then had the grief to learn that Orleans had been evacuated at midnight. He had the poor and only consolation of being told that the retreat was effected in “good order;” but from General d'Aurelle he has up to this moment had no further news whatever. The disaster is tremendous. The gallant Admiral Jauréguiberry was in command of eighty-five splendid naval guns, in admirable position, at Chevilly. When the order was brought by an aide-de-camp to retreat, he refused positively. I am now speaking from a despatch signed by him which I have seen. He said, “I can't

retire; I have my guns here in a capital position to defend the town. I can't take them away, and I will stick to them unless I get a written order from the general commanding-in-chief to go away." The written order speedily came, and then Jauréguiberry, with a heavy heart, spiked all those guns which had been collected with infinite trouble and expense by M. Gambetta's care. What makes the calamity the more galling is, that the Germans, when they occupied Orleans for the second time, are said to have had scarcely any ammunition at all. D'Aurelle is said to have retreated in two lines upon Bourges and Vierzon. Nothing but the last extremity of necessity could have justified him in going so far away from Paris at a moment when any support, however slight, from the army of the Loire, would have been of priceless importance.

An Irish lady with whom I was acquainted thirty years ago, and who inhabited a manor house somewhere in the wilds of Sligo, used to say, "Whenever the servants talk to me of ghosts, I begin to look out for house-breakers." Likewise, whenever I hear of miracles, my first impulse is to see what knavery they hide. I have an instinctive feeling that they are made to order by the political intriguers, just as fascines and gabions are constructed to forward siege works. This detective propensity of mine has had full play since I came to Tours. Since Titus besieged Jerusalem, miracles were never of such frequent occurrence. Miraculous voices are heard at La Salette which warn the faithful against the Man of Sedan and the ally of Garibaldi, whom I take to be Gambetta. A Bishop formally certifies to the authenticity of these voices. The *Française*, which represents that shade of orthodoxy headed by the Bishop of Orleans, and the *Union*, whose inspirations are derived

from the Gesu and the Château of Frohsdorf, vie with each other in making their readers acquainted with miracle workers, and nuns and peasant girls endowed with the gift of prophecy. The former journal, which counts several Academicians among its editors, descants with classic elegance on the miraculous properties of an altar in the cathedral of Orleans, before which Jeanne d'Arc saw a vision of the Virgin Mary. D'Aurelle de Paladine had the weakness, with the principal members of his staff, to go and venerate some relics on this altar, amid all the pomp and circumstance of a military mass. This religious manifestation was taken by those of his soldiers who read the *Siccle* as a political demonstration and an evidence of treasonable intentions towards the Republic—an opinion which was strengthened by a nun having predicted that the younger Bourbons would bow to the elder branch, and that when Henri V. had saved France, Louis Philippe II. would succeed him and renew his baptismal vows in the church of Orleans. As d'Aurelle de Paladine never cried "Vive la République," his Voltairean army naturally thought he was a traitor, whose mission it was to get them massacred. After what I have seen of the enthusiasm of the Mobs here, I cannot otherwise explain the despatch in which he informed Gambetta that they were ill disposed to go forward. But to continue with my miracles. The *Union* takes to itself credit for having discovered another Jeanne d'Arc, whose supernatural qualities are attested by a Bishop. As the *Union* looks forward to a miraculous birth at Frohsdorf, it does not care to accept the Orleans nun, who predicts a fusion of the Legitimist and Orleans interests. Judge, then, how it hugs its *trouvaille*, and cackles over it. Here is the full, true, and particular account of the modern Jeanne d'Arc, as furnished by the *Union*: "We introduce to our readers

a holy maid in the service of a Christian family, strict in the observance of their religious duties. A great many legendary things concerning this marvellous being are circulated, which in various essential respects differ from the precise information we are in a position to give. It is said, in some parts of France, that she belongs so Macon, and in others to the parish of Ars, which is celebrated through the sanctity and miraculous powers of its *cure*, the Abbé Vianey. The young girl in question saw visions from an early age. She latterly received an order from the Virgin to proceed to Paris, and give certain warnings to General Trochu. The Virgin appeared to her several days in succession. Troubled by these renewed visitations, the girl consulted her mistress, who consulted the *curé*, who consulted, as he was bound, the Bishop of Belley. Monsignor Langellerie, after carefully weighing the circumstances submitted to him, gave the young girl leave to set out on her mission, the exact nature of which, she declared, would only be revealed to her by a matron of respectable appearance, whom the Virgin would direct to meet her at the gates of Paris, and who would tell her what she was to say to General Trochu. The girl accomplished her mysterious journey. But little has transpired of what passed in her interview with Trochu, beyond some revelations she made to the General of events that were on the point of taking place. She told him, at the moment she entered his presence, that the French had entered Orleans, though it was impossible for her to have known it by natural means. She also predicted a victorious sortie, which would be followed by depressing news; that the Prussians would not occupy Macon; and that the King of Prussia was destined never to re-enter Berlin." The *Union* does not treat us to the history

of the modern Jeanne d'Arc's passage through the Prussian lines before Paris. But it refers us to a thirty-centime pamphlet, in which it is related, with many other miraculous incidents of the holy maid's journey.

December 8.—The *France* profits by the disaster at Orleans to make a great onslaught upon M. Gambetta. "Personal power," it observes, "can only be justified by success. Now what, after all, has M. Gambetta achieved since he has been Minister of War? Under his administration Metz, Schelestadt, Breisach, Thionville, and La Fère have capitulated; and the enemy, besides occupying Amiens, Rouen, and Orleans, has invested Belfort, threatened Lyons and Besançon, and nearly doubled the diameter of the circle of its occupation." The conclusion of the *France* therefore is, that it is high time for M. Gambetta to distrust his own powers and take to himself a "Council of Government," meaning the knot of ex-deputies at the Hôtel de Bordeaux and the Hôtel de l'Univers, who want an Assembly to be elected forthwith. The *France* quite overlooks the herculean efforts of M. Gambetta, which, in the short space of two months, have produced armies whose warlike appearance astonishes all observers. But if practical results do not speedily come, Gambetta is likely to be held responsible for failure.

Tours is about to be relegated to its natural dulness. No longer will M. Glais Bizoin astonish ordinary mortals by his condescension over matutinal coffee in the Café de la Ville. No longer will Crémieux, the Israelite, attract crowds at the gates of the palace of an ultramontane archbishop, whose hospitality he enjoyed. No longer will Gambetta take his constitutional walk after breakfast in the gardens of the Préfecture, while generals, cap in hand, attend him one after the other to

know whether they are to be promoted, reprimanded, or dismissed. No longer will people fight and intrigue to get a place at the *table d'hôte* of the Hôtel du Faisan. No longer will the Rue Royale, which in ordinary times shows like the High Street of a dull country town, be as crowded as Cheapside at noon. And no longer will certain hotel-keepers and shopkeepers take as much money in a day as they usually do in a month.

The laconic official news from the theatre of war on the Loire I cannot read as very cheering. It is not much to say that General Chanzy, after having been "twice attacked, has maintained his position," and is "able to sustain the honour of our arms." I hear terrible stories about not only regiments but a general running away. The general is said to have been placed under arrest. I continue to think that France ought to be able to expel the invader; but if officers and men won't fight, she may be crushed. In that case the oppression of the conqueror will be so terrible that France will no longer be a nation worth belonging to; and if I were a Frenchman, I should certainly share the feelings of many friends of mine, who say that if Prussia takes Paris they will emigrate to Switzerland or America.

A great many ex-deputies here, MM. Cochery, Lefebvre, Guizot, Montpeyroux, Wilson, Houssard, de Civrac, de Barante, Alfred Le Roux, Roy, de Louly, &c., have been laying their heads together against Gambetta. A deputation of them recently went in a body to the *Constitutionnel* office, where they proclaimed that the continuation of the war was all nonsense; that France had nothing to do but make peace on the best terms that the enemy would give her; that Gambetta ought to be dethroned from his dictatorship, and a Constituent Assembly at once elected. They wished the *Constitutionnel* to publish a manifesto, which they brought

ready cut and dried. Although the *Constitutionnel* is a journal still conducted by the old Imperialist staff, and is very hostile to the Republic, the editor, who received this deputation, categorically refused to have anything to do with the manifesto, and told the deputation that if they wished to protest against M. Gambetta, they must do it their own way. Thus foiled in one mode of assault they tried another, and carried their bill of indictment to the Préfecture, where one of M. Gambetta's secretaries, out of courtesy to them as ex-deputies, requested them to come at two in the afternoon for an answer. When they called again they were simply told that M. Gambetta had nothing whatever to say to them. In point of fact they are nobodies. The quality of an ex-Imperialist deputy manifestly confers no status whatever above that of any other citizen.

The terrible lists of military executions of private soldiers which daily appear in the *Moniteur*, and which examples of severity may be very necessary, provoke the observation that one very seldom hears of the punishment of officers, and yet there is an appalling amount of testimony that very many officers behave ill before the enemy. A captain of cavalry of the 15th Corps, now a prisoner, has been cashiered in his absence, for having failed to join his squadron when it received marching orders on the occasion of the first evacuation of Orleans, and thereby allowing himself voluntarily to be made a prisoner. Soldiers will ask why sentence of death is not recorded against this captain. Perhaps, however, he only over-slept himself, and did not mean to be absent on parade.

I have seen one of Garibaldi's staff officers (a Frenchman) who was present at the audacious attempt to retake Dijon by night, and had his horse killed under him and a bullet through his kepi. He told me, with tears in

his eyes, that he had lived to see Italians fight well, and the French soldiers, who should have seconded them, run away. Had it not been for the faint-heartedness of the Mobiles, who did not come to the scratch according to orders, there is every probability that the 'enterprise would have succeeded. My informant speaks in the highest terms of Menotti Garibaldi and his brigade. A great many Garibaldians are men of fortune and high position, who have made immense sacrifices to join his standard; among these are General Frappoli, Colonel Lobbia, and M. Mauro-Macchi, all three deputies who resigned their seats to take service. Then there are MM. Podio, Bizzoni, Beghelli, and Castellazzo, well-known journalists. A Spanish nobleman, Orense, Marquis d'Albaida, is in the ranks, with 300 volunteers, and there are fully 300 Greeks equipped at their own expense. M. Charles Tamburini, the son of the great singer, has left his family and his comfortable home in London to share the hardships of the Garibaldians. I saw the other day in Tours, wearing the uniform of a Garibaldian, Captain Fra Panteleo, the celebrated monk who led troops in Sicily with a sword in one hand and a crucifix in the other. He has come here because he could not get on with Colonel Bordone, who, it appears, is obnoxious to many of Garibaldi's most devoted followers. Panteleo is a man in the prime of life, with a round face, and short, thick, light brown whiskers. In a clerical dress he would look a "burly priest."

I have just come from visiting the ambulance in the Palais de Justice. The Salle des Pas Perdus was occupied with soldiers with slight arm and head wounds and dysentery. In the hall, where the historical High Court acquitted Pierre Bonaparte, were lying on chaff litter those who had been badly mutilated in the fighting before Orleans. There were only three beds in the

place, and they were occupied by men in an almost hopeless condition. A groan was now and then audible, but the patients, who were lying down, seemed as a general rule too exhausted to utter a sound of any kind. The witnesses' benches were occupied by poor wretches who had neither blanket nor mattress between them and the hard boards. The only pillows they had were their knapsacks. It was shocking to see bandaged heads so badly bolstered. As I was walking from one extremity to the other of the hall, a French lady, whose dexterity in attending to wounds and well simulated cheerfulness I had noticed, came up and asked me if I had any old trousers or shirts to give away, because they were very badly wanted by some of the invalids. She showed me one man who was surrounded by a surgeon and three Sisters of Charity. He had several body wounds, from which they were trying to cut away with little scissors what remained of a nether garment. It was plastered to him with coagulated blood. Inside of the bar there were freshly-arrived invalids, on whom the white-robed sisters were operating with sponges and warm water. Last March this space was partially occupied by journalists who had come to witness Pierre Bonaparte's trial, and the wives of the judges and great functionaries of the department of the Indre-et-Loire. A fainting Mobile leant against the bar where *mouchards* gave their suborned evidence, and on which Henri Rochefort placed his nicely-gloved hand as he uttered his well-pondered and very effective sarcasms. An old and a middle-aged woman knelt beside a dying man on the very spot where Laurier and Floquet pleaded. I suppose they were near relatives who had just found him out. Their cheeks were scalded with tears, and one of them seemed to be reciting the prayer *pour les agonisants*. She struck her breast repeatedly as her lips moved. I was curious

to see by whom the *banc des accusés* was occupied. It is a sort of pew, in which the green cushion placed in it for the benefit of the homicide of Auteuil still remains. A Franc-tireur was lying on the seat, and another was sitting on the floor with his back propped up by the partition dividing it from the compartment where the Corsican colonels and majors sat who were charged with the difficult task of controlling the violent temper of the Emperor's cousin. Those Francs-tireurs' hoods, which had the appearance of monks' cowls, were drawn over their heads, so that it was impossible for me to see their faces. The daughter-in-law of the Countess de Flavigny, and a lady who said her son was fighting under General Chanzy, distributed the clothing to soldiers who were strong enough to come and ask for a change of linen or a pair of stockings. I remarked to them and the nuns the necessity of clearing away the chaff litter from the passages between the files of wounded. The irritating dust which this litter occasioned visibly affected the soldiers suffering from chest wounds, and brought on internal hæmorrhage. But the ladies seemed to think it nobody's business either to clear away the litter or open the windows, which are so high up that draughts would not be apprehended from their being a little opened. The Sister of Charity is the soldier of the hospital. She is good, courageous, and devoted. But she is so broken to passive obedience, that in new situations she has no intelligent initiative. A Florence Nightingale is badly wanted to supervise the French ambulances, and Gambetta should try to discover one either in England or America."

Bordeaux, Dec. 15.—This is a grand metropolitan city, and I feel an immense relief at being translated from dull, prosaic, unintellectual Tours to this great centre of French civilization. I may, perhaps, be laughed at for my faith,

but I cling to the belief that France is invincible; and even if Paris should fall—and I do not expect such a catastrophe—Bordeaux might still be the capital of a great nation. What may be called the “west-end” of this city is the central part around the splendid theatre—the finest in France. All the best streets converge upon the magnificent place on which this theatre stands. This quarter, well paved and well drained, considerably above the level of the river, is altogether charming. In the midst of an immense population you enjoy the fresh breeze of the Garonne, and have all the advantages of the country. In the best parts of Bordeaux there is really a *rus in urbe*. As a winter residence I should infinitely prefer Bordeaux to Paris. In summer it would also be better for those who do not mind mosquitoes, which I do, and of whom I have a terrible recollection when they paid their attentions to me at Bordeaux many years ago. Since I have been here it has rained almost continually, and the streets show a very good imitation of London mud. They say it rains in Bordeaux more than in most parts of France. But the breeze from the Garonne is very refreshing. The quays—especially those parts below bridge, where the eye is delighted by splendid shipping—are charming. I have found out there a restaurant looking upon the Garonne and the hills beyond, where one may get a good repast in quiet—such as is not to be had in the frequented parts of the town. The Café de Bordeaux, opposite the theatre, keeps a good cook, but has an administration which spoils the Egyptians. Habitually they put on several francs more than is due upon every bill, trusting to ignorance and shamefacedness that no objection will be taken. The last time I dined there they charged me five francs for a duck’s liver. As the average price for a fat duck is but three francs, I kicked

against this extortion, and shall not patronize that café again. The "bourgeoisie" have gone clean crazy in the expectation of making enormous profits out of the sudden crowds of visitors. But, as in reality the town is large enough to accommodate far greater numbers than those who have to come in the wake of the Government, the prices of lodgings are rapidly coming down, and people who asked a year's rent for a month are now putting out placards without finding customers. I never saw anywhere such good hackney carriages as there are here. They are as big as the Lord Mayor's state coach, and drawn by lithesome Languedoc horses, which go twice as fast as any cattle you ever see in Paris. The fare is only two francs the hour, and the drivers are particularly civil. It is a pleasure to ask a question in any shop, so intelligent and so civil is the answer which you always get. There are outlying parts of Bordeaux which I have not yet thoroughly investigated, but which, from the specimens I have seen, look mean and dirty, like the worst parts of the borough of Southwark. But the centre of the town is magnificent. The Jardin Public, a great improvement upon the Parc Monceaux, is surrounded by handsome houses, much in the style of those of the Regent's Park, but more solid. On the Place des Quinconces I see every day at drill large bodies of exceedingly smart National Guards. The market is delightful to see. Every variety of vegetable is there in the highest perfection. Fish, flowers, and fruit are all to be found in sections radiating from a central point, without loss of time in seeking. The cafés, without being so splendidly ornamented as those of Marseilles, are large, comfortable, and supply good things.

The papers here are immensely indignant at the Dutch Government having given up four French officers to

Prussia, who were forthwith shot. I see nothing astonishing in this conduct on the part of a sovereign who employed Madame Musard to treat for the sale of Luxemburg to France.

Wholesome examples have been made of two Imperial generals. Brigadier-General Morandy, commanding the 1st Brigade of the 3rd Division of the 16th Corps d'Armée, is dismissed for "manifest incapacity in the field." General of Division Sol, commanding the 18th Division, is dismissed for having "too precipitately evacuated Tours." This General Sol is the son-in-law of M. Gouin, the ex-senator and great Tours banker. That, out of fear of exposing his father-in-law's property, he did evacuate Tours too precipitately is proved by the fact that the enemy has never got farther towards Tours than Montrichard, and is now even farther back.

I rather think some of M. Gambetta's friends must have suggested that the soldiers, who had been accustomed to reverence the big epaulettes, cocked hats, and profuse embroidery of the Empire, would not easily believe him to be a personage of importance in the almost more than plain civilian dress which he has been in the habit of wearing, he having other things to think of than his toilette. I observed, while on his way here, from Tours, at Poitiers, as he walked along the platform to his special train for Bourges, and returned the salutes of the crowd, that he had put on a handsome black surtout, turned down with Russian sable, and that he wore boots up to the knee, which, but for the want of the meretricious tassel, might be called Hessian. In this attire, on horseback, and followed by a couple of generals as aides-de-camp, he may cut a very respectable figure in reviewing an army, without incurring the ridicule of affecting to be a military man. It will be quite enough

for the common eye in the ranks if he is not dressed exactly like any banker's clerk, and so far I think a slight theatrical display justifiable and expedient.

Whilst the Bordeaux Government was settling itself in its new-found home, General Chanzy was admirably justifying his title to the most important military command which M. Gambetta had to confer. We have seen how he was cut off from Orleans on the 2nd and 3rd of December, with his own 16th Corps and the 17th. These, reinforced in the following week by the 21st Corps, which was sent to him either from Tours or Blois, constituted the new active Army of the Loire, with which he was to endeavour to fulfil the hopes which General d'Aurelle had failed to realize. M. Gambetta had pledged himself to support the new commander with all the forces of the west. But these forces existed as yet only in a rudimentary condition, and weeks must elapse before they could be drawn upon with any certainty. In the meanwhile it was most important to present the best possible face to the enemy.

The 16th Corps, after the defeats of the 3rd and 4th of December, had retreated down the river as far as Mer, within fourteen miles of Blois. General Chanzy ordered its columns to re-form at Beaugency, seven miles nearer to Orleans. On the 7th, two days after the occupation of Orleans, Prince Frederick Charles sent the Duke of Mecklenburg down the right bank of the river, with only the 17th Division, and the remnant of Von der Tann's Bavarians, apparently not expecting that he would encounter any serious opposition. It did not seem probable that the advance upon Tours would be impeded by only a portion of that French army which, as a whole, had already been beaten and dispersed. But as the leading columns of the Mecklenburgers were filing from the village of Meung, on the morning of the 7th, to debouch upon the plain, on the side towards Beaugency,

they were received with a hot artillery and rifle fire, which compelled them to fall back and seek shelter until their artillery could come up, when the Mecklenburgers advanced, and the battle became general. It soon appeared that the French were in superior force, and some of the German regiments suffered severely, until the Bavarians came up from the rear late in the afternoon, when the French were driven over the undulating plain as far as Beaugency. There Chanzy received reinforcements, and commenced an animated attack. The Duke's army was at the same time strengthened by the arrival of the 22nd Division. On the morning of the 8th, the French were posted on a ridge, on which stands the village of Tavers, below Beaugency. The French attacked, between eight and nine in the morning, the battle raging round the village of Messas and extending as far as Cravant, without any decisive result, and by evening, although some ground had been gained, and Cravant and Messas had been taken, an unpleasant sense of disappointment was general in the German camp. It was resolved that something should be done to augment the acquisitions of the day, and in the night two Hanseatic regiments were sent to secure the village of Vernon, which they took, capturing 400 prisoners; the Bavarians being successful in a similar enterprise at La Mée.

On the 9th the cannonading began again at daybreak, and it was seen that the German position had improved, the Grand Duke's army occupying the ground on which the French had stood on the day before. The village of Villorceau was taken by the Germans early in the day, and they continued to gain ground until the afternoon, when it was seen that General Chanzy was concentrating strongly on the German right; he was in reality falling back upon the Forest of Marchenoir. In the course of the day the Grand Duke had been strengthened by the

arrival of the 10th Corps from Orleans. To be obliged to send for reinforcements was an unusual experience for the Germans, and they wondered at the pertinacity of their enemy. On the morning of the 10th the French again attacked the 22nd, which was holding Cernay and Cravant, and by noon the whole line was engaged, but the operations on both sides were characterized by caution. At the close of the day the French had drawn in their wings, and were concentrated between Villermain and Josnes, with the Forest of Marchenoir in their rear. On the 11th the two armies stood inactive, merely observing one another, but on the 12th, the French had mysteriously disappeared, and the Grand Duke's army set out, marching by cross-roads towards the enemy. Chanzy had dodged his pursuers: while they were thinking of driving him upon Tours, he had moved to take up a position stronger than that which he had abandoned, on the direct road to Paris, and where he could receive reinforcements from the west. The French had reached Fréteval, not without great difficulty and severe losses in rear-guard actions; moreover, the state of the roads, strewn with knapsacks and Chassepôts, told that at length some at least of their troops were becoming demoralized.

About midway between Châteaudun and Vendôme the Loir traverses a range of hills, in one of the valleys of which lies the town of Fréteval, on the left bank of the river. The great Forest of Marchenoir extends from the river near Fréteval almost to Beaugency; and another forest, that of Fréteval, extends from the right bank eastward. The French had taken up a position on a spur of the range, on the right bank of the river, with the wood of Fréteval behind them and on their left, the wood of Marchenoir on the right, and the River Loir, which there makes a bend, in their front. They had planted batteries wherever any advantage of ground was to be had, and

filled the wooded slopes with sharpshooters. The village of Fréteval was taken at the point of the bayonet in the fighting on the 14th, but could not be held on account of its exposed position. On the morning of the 15th the state of affairs looked unpleasant for the Germans. They had been sent to drive the Army of the Loire farther away from Paris; and now that army, by a skilful movement, had not only placed itself on the road to Paris, but had got the start of them, leaving them in its rear. No German army was any longer between that of General Chanzy and the one which was investing the capital, and only an inferior force was behind. As Chanzy was in communication with Le Mans and the west, he might at any time become strong enough to advance boldly upon Paris by Châteaudun, and indeed it was by no means certain that he was not already doing so. The position of the French at Fréteval was too strong to be stormed with the force at the Grand Duke's disposal; but, fortunately for him, a direct attack became unnecessary.

Prince Frederick Charles had sent the 9th Corps down the Loire—the distinction between this river and the Loir will be borne in mind—which had appeared in the rear of Blois, on the east bank of the river, on the 12th; but as the bridge was broken, the corps could not enter Blois until the 10th Corps, marching to that city, held out a hand to it, when the 9th passed over on an extemporized bridge of boats. The 10th Corps was next sent to Vendôme, and its success there compelled the French to abandon their strong position at Fréteval, higher up the river. The French were posted in front of Vendôme, which they held on the 14th and 15th, but they were beaten in an artillery duel, and evacuated the town on the evening of the latter day, the Germans entering it on the 16th. The German line was now formed, the Duke of Mecklenburg occupying Cloyes and Morée, the 10th Corps

being at Vendôme, and the 9th at Blois. On the 17th Chanzy had another rear-guard affair with Von der Tann at Epuisay, where the roads from Vendôme and Morée to Saint-Calais unite, and then withdrew to Le Mans, which he entered on the 21st. He had been fighting throughout a losing battle, but he held that anything was better than the continued retreats by which the soldiers had been disheartened. The tenacity of the French in these incessant engagements had astonished their adversaries, but it seems to have been chiefly the tenacity of the new generals. The qualities of the various corps of the French army are so diverse that no general statement on the subject can be warranted: while some of the troops fought with a patriotic courage, others surrendered themselves prisoners with the most shameless levity, even seeking out the Uhlans to be conducted to head-quarters.

On the 20th General Voigts-Rhetz, commanding the 10th Corps, defeated a body of French near Monnaie, and drove them beyond Notre Dame d'Oé, a few miles nearer Tours. On the following morning the Germans took possession of the heights commanding the stone bridge of Tours. A patrol of cuirassiers came upon the bridge, and shots were fired upon them by groups of civilians, when three or four of the Germans were killed or wounded. The patrol retired at full gallop. Immediately afterwards a cannonade was opened upon the town, and the shells, falling in the streets, killed several persons. A flag of truce having been hoisted, the Mayor proceeded to the enemy, and at his request the cannonade was stopped. The Germans did not, however, enter the town on that occasion.

General Chanzy was leading his troops with great skill, but it is doubtful whether the Parisians would have accepted his eccentric retreat, and his subsequent enforced inactivity, as a fulfilment of M. Gambetta's promises. But the comparative ignorance in which Paris was kept of

the state of the provinces was one of the conditions of the prolongation of war. The pigeon, we have seen, was only an uncertain conveyer of news to the capital ; but the privations of Paris were made known to the departments and to Europe with great frequency by balloons.

The first balloon sent by the Paris post-office left on the 23rd of September. Between that date and the end of November 30 balloons were sent from Paris, each with, on an average, two passengers, 200 to 300 kilogrammes of letters, and a couple of pigeons. The greatest distance travelled by these balloons, except the one which fell in Norway, was about 200 kilometres. By December it was not known what had become of half of the balloons which had been sent. They were usually made of strong calico, covered with two or three coatings of a varnish composed of linseed oil and a little oxide of lead ; they were filled with the gas used for lighting the streets, and when full occupied a space of about 2,000 cubic mètres. The balloons were made at the Northern and the Orleans railway stations. At the former white calico alone was used—and the balloons were sewn together by machinery ; at the latter they were sewn by hand, and the material used was coloured calico ; the postage (20 centimes per four grammes) amply covered the expense of the despatch.

The farthest distance attained was traversed by one which fell at None, in Norway. The aeronauts went up from Paris in the balloon at 11.45 P.M. on the 24th of November, with the intention of going south towards Tours. They passed the Prussian lines at a height of 800 mètres, but kept still rising in order to get into a different current of air. After the lapse of some time, having again descended, they heard a noise as of many locomotives, but soon found out, to their utter dismay, that they were drifting over the ocean. They saw several ships, and endeavoured, by letting out a long rope touching the sea, to

check the speed of the balloon, and also hoping, possibly, to get help from some vessel if they in their sight let themselves into the sea; but they soon found this attempt to be fruitless, and they had to cut the line and rise again. They now let out a pigeon with a message of their distress, but with no hope of being saved. About twelve o'clock they seemed to perceive some fixed outlines looking like land covered with snow, but were not certain, and it soon vanished in the fog and clouds. Fancying again they heard the sea, they pulled open one of the mail bags and threw out some newspapers in order to rise higher up; but a couple of hours after (or about three in the afternoon) they felt as if something touched the car of the balloon, and on looking out they found themselves moving over and skirting the trees. At once they made up their minds to try to escape, and, coming within a few mètres of the ground, they let themselves out, and owing to the deep snow they were not much injured.

The travellers, exhausted both in body and mind, remained during the night where they had descended, the temperature being 20 deg. Fahrenheit. Next morning, after light broke, they commenced roaming about in the snow, not knowing in the least where they were, but supposed it to be Iceland. At length they found a dilapidated house, in which they kindled a fire, which attracted the attention of some people felling timber in the forest, who took them home and cared for them as well as they could; nevertheless, the travellers not knowing the least of the language, they remained utterly at a loss as to where they were. At last one of the men produced a matchbox, on which "Christiania" was printed, and this told them they were in Norway. By gesticulations they explained who they were, how they had come, and where they would go to, and soon the clergyman and one or two others who could speak French came to help, and, after

seeing them properly clothed and provided for, sent them on in sledges, first to Konysberg and then to Drammen, where the occurrence was already known. The place where the Frenchmen alighted was Lidfild, a mountain about five Norwegian miles south-west of Konysberg (on the map marked "Seljord"). The distance from Paris to this place is about 840 English miles, and the time of the journey from a quarter to twelve on Thursday evening to three next afternoon (15½ hours). The aeronauts were M. Rolier, Captain in the Artillery, and M. Dechamps, and the bearer of despatches from General Trochu to M. Gambetta.

The Bordeaux Correspondent, under date December 15th, wrote concerning M. Gambetta's voyage through the air :—

I was yesterday in the company of two gentlemen who have made the most remarkable of the balloon voyages accomplished since the investment of Paris. I mean Mr. May, the American, who left the French capital simultaneously with M. Gambetta, though in another balloon, and M. Martin, who descended at Belle-Isle, in the "Jules Favre," on the 1st of December. Their impressions wholly differed from those of M. Gambetta, who has described to me the experiences of his aerial sail from Paris to Montdidier. The American gentleman intensely enjoyed the "easy locomotion" of the balloon. "Nothing could," he said, "be more beautiful. There you went, ever so much faster than an express train, without a single jolt, or the least sense of friction. The wind was not in your face, and you hardly felt it at your back. There was no noise, no dust, no racket, but the most lovely gliding motion. Apart from the Prussian bullets that whistled unpleasantly round the cars of the balloonists, the single drawback was the faint smell of gas, which throughout the

journey betrayed the bad quality of the varnish used by Nadar in the manufacture of his cotton balloons." The descent Mr. May speaks of as "just nothing" at all. "The car of the balloon touched the ground as deftly as a humming bird, hopped as lightly fifteen yards into the air, and was then easily brought to earth by some peasants, to whom ropes had been thrown out." One of the phenomena which balloon travelling presented to the American gentleman was the great distance at which, in the upper regions, articulate sounds are distinctly audible. Messrs. May and Reynolds conversed over Creil at an incredible distance with MM. Spuller and Gambetta. They could understand what the Germans shouted to each other, though at more than a couple of thousand yards above them. The tonic effect of a high altitude was not lessened by the volleys of musketry directed at the transatlantic *voyageurs*, who lunched in their balloon, and threw various tit-bits to the soldiers beneath, to prove to them that Paris could yet indulge in the delicacies of the table. Gambetta's impressions were entirely different. He was almost, to use his own language, "stunned with the overpowering idea of Nature's force and man's weakness. He felt, to his great astonishment, that he had no sense of the abyss." The world seemed to recede from the balloon. Instead of being dazzled with the vast horizon which was opened to his gaze, he was "stupefied at the total obliteration of the picturesque in the boundless expanse beneath him. The earth had to him the appearance of a badly designed carpet, or rather a carpet in which the different coloured wools had been woven entirely by chance. Light and vastness were deprived of the value which shade and proportion give them." Nature seen from a balloon was in M. Gambetta's estimation *une vilaine Chinoiserie*, and the

art-loving child of the South thanked Heaven when he touched earth again, "and got into a sphere where man has a *point de résistance* in struggling against the tyranny of Creation." M. Spuller, M. Gambetta's companion, who, I presume, is of German origin, as he is of German appearance, was otherwise affected. He enjoyed the sensation of being carried along as helplessly as if he were a log of wood floating down a river. The Pantheistic leanings of the Teuton came out in him. He was glad, as the Hindoos put it, to be lost in the Great Whole. In M. Gambetta there was manifested that tendency of the Gallo-Latin family to react against Nature, which is at the bottom of every truly artistic organization. The American studied "ballooning" as compared with steam locomotion. He had suffered from the inconveniences of travelling across continents in "railway cars," and his attention was turned from the picturesque side of the question to the practical. M. Martin, who is a weather-beaten naval officer, speaks with almost superstitious awe of the small hours of a very cold December's morning. The "Jules Favre" rose at once above the snow clouds which obscured the sky, into a stratum of bitter cold air, along which it was driven with giddy speed in a westerly direction. M. Martin says he felt like a man who had been buried alive in a wide and chilling vault, and was beyond the reach of human sympathy or aid. Blackness was beneath him. The stars above did not look friendly; and, presently, some snow clouds obscured the constellations by which sailors guide themselves across the ocean. The instruments of the aerostats had got out of order, in consequence of which neither M. Martin nor his companion could tell the point of the compass on which they were running. At four o'clock they perceived a sheet of water. Taking it for the Loire, they allowed the balloon to scud along. But presently they

discerned a light-house, and some ships with lanterns to the fore. Martin, who is from the department of Finistère, took his bearings in a moment; and, with the promptitude of a sailor, set about effecting an instantaneous descent over Belle-Isle. A couple of thousand yards more, and he and his companions would have been lost, for they had got almost to the western side of the island. He climbed up in the ropes, and pulled open the escape valve, the pulley of which had been blown out of his reach by the hurricane in which they travelled. The descent was so rapid that M. Martin and his friend lost consciousness while falling. Their balloon bounded like a wounded monster, tearing off the roof of a house, breaking down a wall, and dashing madly against an ancient church, where the gas was crushed out of its cotton envelope. When M. Martin recovered his senses he found that some coastguards had rushed to his assistance, and were holding down the car, from which the other aerostat had been thrown in one of the mad bounds of the balloon. On proceeding to search for him, they discovered him bathed in blood, and in a state of insensibility. The doctor of the island was speedily fetched, and was accompanied by M. Armand Trochu, the General's brother. M. Armand Trochu has a little property in Belle-Isle, where he lives with his mother, who is in her eighty-fourth year, and a native of the island. It was, curiously enough, the roof of M. Armand Trochu's house which was torn down by the "Jules Favre." The old lady, in point of religious feelings, belongs to La Bretagne Bretonnante. She affirms that she had been throughout the night praying for a sign from heaven that France is to be saved by the instrumentality of her son, and that when the rafters crashed over her head she called out to her granddaughter, "La Providence du Roi de Prusse ne va pas gagner la partie; en voilà

la preuve." As this anecdote comes from M. Martin, it should not be classed among the fictions of 1870.

By the middle of December, the Baden Corps, which had for some time occupied Dijon, became unpleasantly aware of a concentration of the enemy in its front, and General Werder, its commander, determined to ascertain the strength of the enemy. Accordingly, on the 18th of December, the 1st and 2nd Baden Brigades, under General Glumer and Prince William of Baden, attacked Nuits, which was taken in the evening, after five hours' fighting, 600 prisoners being captured. Prince William and General Glumer were both wounded. The position thus won was not held by the Germans, who very soon abandoned Dijon. On the 30th of December, the Correspondent with General Garibaldi wrote from Macon :—

The evacuation of Dijon by the Germans is by no means surprising, firstly, because some days previous to the evacuation a large portion of the troops who occupied the town were sent northwards; and, secondly, on account of the vast number of trains, carrying troops, artillery, and military stores, which the French have been sending during the past week in the direction of Beaune. In fact, since last Thursday week, railway communication between Lyons and Beaune has been entirely interrupted for the public, the Minister of War having placed the line in requisition. So Dijon has been evacuated by the Germans and occupied by our troops, and yet nothing has been gained by the movement, unless it is the railway to Paris. When Dijon was worth taking—that is to say, when there was artillery and ammunition there—the Government allowed a few thousand Garibaldians and Mobiles to attack the place with three batteries of 8-pounders, while the cannon used by the enemy were equal to 24-pounders. Now

that the Germans have had time to ruin the town, to remove their artillery and ammunition, and, finally, to execute a retreat in perfect order, an imposing army is brought against them, which, instead of being sent in pursuit, appears to be reposing on its easily-gained laurels. To give you an idea of the number of cannon which have been sent from Lyons in the direction of Beaune, I will mention that the military authorities have placed all the omnibus horses in Lyons in requisition for the artillery, besides almost all the cart horses in the surrounding neighbourhood. What a pity it is that a portion of this artillery was not sent to General Cremer previous to the fight at Nuits! It is not surprising, with the system which is followed by M. Gambetta and his colleagues, that the French are beaten in every direction. They allow the Germans to penetrate into the very heart of France without making any serious resistance; they allow them to occupy strong positions; and then, when they have had time to repose and to collect their forces, an army very inferior in number, with hardly any artillery, is sent to attack them, and, as a matter of course, is cut to pieces.

Such complete confusion reigns all along the line, from Lyons to Beaune, that I hardly know when I shall be able to get on to Dijon unless I post, which is by no means an agreeable mode of travelling when the roads are two feet deep in snow, as at the present moment. I mentioned above that there were no passenger trains from Lyons to Beaune. A certain number of military trains pass along the line during the day, but these have no fixed hour either for arrival or departure, so that it is necessary for a person who really wishes to get off to remain at the railway station until a train passes. I am told that between here and Beaune the railway stations are positively encumbered with artillery and ammunition.

waggon. It is therefore evident that, during the past week, an immense number of troops have been sent towards Beaune. The Germans who were at Dijon have retired, it is said, to Gray. Two days have expired since they evacuated Dijon, but we have no news of a battle having taken place in the neighbourhood of Gray. Surely the French generals will pursue them, and yet the fact of the railway stations being encumbered with artillery seems to indicate that no advance is being made.

The weather here is bitterly cold, there are two feet of snow in the streets, and immense blocks of ice, four or five inches thick, are floating down the Saône. I think I told you, in a previous correspondence, that Frapoli, our ex-chief of the general staff, had been made general of division by the Minister of War, with power to form an army of 60,000 men; up to the present, I believe that he has got together about sixty; but the amusing thing is, that on the first floor of the very hotel where the General has established his head-quarters is the recruiting office for the Garibaldian volunteers. On the floor above is that of the General. A telegram from Dijon, made public by the Prefect of Macon, as I write, says that the Germans have evacuated Gray, and have withdrawn to Vesoul.

A lieutenant of the 25th Rhenish Infantry wrote from Pesmes, on the march:—

The 1st and 2nd battalion of our regiment had been for the last few days in and around Gray, resting after their numerous fatigues. At the urgent solicitation of the commander of our regiment, our battalion at last obtained the longed-for permission to rest and recruit itself; when already on the march towards Gray, we received counter orders to scour the country in all direc-

tions. This guerilla warfare is an unpleasant kind of fighting, ever seeking after an invisible foe, who suddenly, when one least expects it, darts out of his woods in order to disappear the next moment with equal celerity; added to this, the fatiguing marches, the bad food, which is a necessary consequence of our rapid advance over paths which are absolutely impracticable for our proviant-column, try to the utmost the endurance of our men. When one at last has brought the foe to a standstill, and compelled him to show fight, should the struggle take an unfavourable turn for him, he mostly succeeds in effecting a withdrawal upon his ever-present line of retreat. The laurels which we hope to gain after our fatigues and privations vanish into thin air, and the game has to be commenced all over again. Scarcely has the soldier gained his quarters, and has begun by anticipation to rejoice over his much-needed rest, than the alarm is sounded—the bushrangers have attacked the foreposts, but should they perceive the numerical superiority is not on their side, they retreat to their fastnesses as quickly as they came. As we marched on Besançon, we heard that our 1st battalion, in the neighbourhood of Gray, had had a successful engagement, and that the detachment of Uhlans attached to our regiment had made a brilliant attack on the enemy's infantry: our regiment had several wounded; the Uhlans especially suffered. On the afternoon of this day, a rain of bullets poured upon us from an ambush in a wood we had to pass; we were obliged to attack the position, as it completely commanded the road along which we had to advance. The *Francs-tireurs* here appeared to be better commanded than usual for they defended themselves obstinately, and chose their positions with great circumspection. Low brushwood skirted the entrance to the wood; soon, however, we

found ourselves under lofty trees. I had advanced, among the first in the chain of *tirailleurs*, when the fight, as soon as we passed the outskirts of the wood, broke up into hand-to-hand encounters. Our men behaved admirably, and aimed wherever they could discern an exposed spot in the covered positions of the enemy. When we had advanced about fifty paces under the high trees, the enemy, concealed by their denser growth, directed a furious and obstinate fire on us. I ordered several of my men to advance in wide curves, whilst we in the front continued our fire. Soon the enemy drew back, leaving skirmishers to cover his retreat. One young fellow attracted our notice particularly. Springing from tree to tree, and continually firing, he had already done us much harm, when an under-officer, renowned as a good shot, who had already aimed at him several times without effect, said, "Herr Lieutenant, I shall yet stop the jumping of that French harlequin." At the next shot our adversary rolled in the snow. I was quickly at his side. He was a handsome youth, with the first down on his upper lip; his white hands did not appear to have ever done an hour's hard work. The ball had penetrated his breast, and the blood gushed in streams from the wound. As we considered the fight at an end, and had completed our task, I remained at his side, and sought to raise the groaning form. He could speak no more; suddenly he seized me convulsively by the hand; his limbs quivered—his whole form seemed to stretch itself out—his eyes appeared about to burst from their sockets—a deep groan—and he was no more. Slowly I let his body glide down on the snow. It was a weird and ghastly scene; the pale countenance of the young man took a gentle expression in death; around him were the grave faces of our soldiers, who in solemn silence leant upon their

weapons. Through the high trees came a glimmering light: they stretched their mighty branches over us, as if they would conceal with their protecting arms man's cruel deeds from the eyes of the unseen God. In his breast-pocket we found several letters from his old mother, and the portrait of a young lady—probably his sweetheart. His address was in his pocket-book. I took possession of the different articles, cut off a lock of his hair, and sent the things as soon as I possibly could to his mother, a lady of position in Lyons. She, poor soul, perhaps little foreboded that her son lay cold and stiff under the tall trees, and that no hand was raised to prepare him a last resting-place. Such, however, is war—a fearful word of terrible meaning, whose actual signification only soldiers understand. In many places the white snow was soaked in human blood, and the glittering hoar frost on the bushes was sprinkled with the purple rain. We returned to our column. Our advance was not further disputed. Slowly we dragged ourselves on through the deep snow, and tried to enliven ourselves as best we could on the way. We are so accustomed to marching, that if one took the legs only of a *Funfundzwanziger* and placed them in an upright position, they would march of their own accord. We have still, however, a good piece of work before us, for the enemy's forces increase from day to day. A large force is advancing from the south—probably with the intention of trying to regain the lost passes of the Vosges, and attacking our armies in the rear. In order to worthily fulfil the task which yet remains to us, we require more than anything else proper clothing in this severe weather, and food more proportionate to the immense fatigues we have to undergo. Most of our men, as I before said, have to endure the greatest privation; they have actually no shoes to their feet, some have to run

barefoot, and that in the deep snow, and continual mounting guard is no joke. Although fresh supplies of clothing have long been ordered, they have never reached us. Who is to blame for this I know not.

We shall before long have to revert to the German movement of which the evacuation of Dijon was the commencement, but in the meantime must notice one of the consequences of the attack on Nuits—an assassination at Lyons, which for a while gave great concern to the Bordeaux Government. The Correspondent with Garibaldi's army visited Lyons on the occasion of this tragic event, and thus wrote from that city on the 21st of December:—

I have said that in the battle in the neighbourhood of Nuits, the 1st and 2nd Legions of the department of the Rhone were terribly knocked about. This was too much for the advanced party at Lyons. They had witnessed with comparative indifference the capitulation of Sedan, the bombardment of Strasburg, the fall of the different small fortified towns, the capitulation of Metz, the sorties from Paris, the defeat of Garibaldi under Dijon, the defeat of the Army of the Loire, but here was something that came home to them. In the affair at Nuits the blood of Lyons had been spilt; "eye for eye, tooth for tooth!" blood must be spilt in revenge. Such is the reasoning of the Reds. In default of a Prussian a Frenchman would do: they are not long in finding victims. The Commander of the 12th Battalion of the National Guards happened to be passing along the Boulevard of the Croix-Rousse. Quick he is surrounded, and ordered to have the rappel beaten, and march with his troops upon the hotel. For the mob, in their fury, intended stringing up all the functionaries in Lyons from the Prefect to the Mayor. The commander, by name Arnaud, refuses, upon which the crowd menace

him with death, and several of the men, who were armed, quietly load their guns; women, who were there in considerable numbers, rush upon him, slap and scratch his face, and pull his beard. Commander Arnaud draws his revolver, and fires three shots—some say in the air, others on the people—in any case no one was either killed or wounded. The furious crowd, maddened by resistance, and eager to dip their fingers in blood, fall upon the unfortunate commander, drag him into a low wine shop, go through the farce of a sham trial, and condemn him to death. He is then dragged to a piece of waste ground, a few yards distant, and his executioners present themselves. Arnaud then understands that he has already one foot in the grave, but his courage does not forsake him; he takes off his kepi, and shouts “Vive la République.” His persecutors then begin to open their eyes to the atrocity of the crime they are about to commit, and a few cries for pardon are raised, but it is too late. Three or four of the assassins discharge their guns, and their victim falls wounded, but not dead. A youth of sixteen then rushes forward with a revolver, intending to blow out his brains; but although Arnaud is wounded in several places, the instinct of life is still strong, and he manages to thrust back the arm which is to put an end to his existence. Three men then point their guns close to his head, pull the triggers, and all is over. The body is picked up and taken to the Mairie, and the assassins then send to inform the murdered man’s wife of what has occurred. The preceding events took place in the morning, and in the afternoon of the same day the assassins proceeded to the square of the Hôtel de Ville, accompanied by a large number of women carrying red flags. They found the square held by the National Guard, with loaded guns. Several deputations, which

I believe were arrested as soon as they entered the Hôtel de Ville, were allowed to pass, and a considerable number of red flags were taken away from the women, who formed the principal feature of the demonstration. I have often noticed that cold water is the best thing for dispersing French mobs. On the present occasion it happened to rain hard all the afternoon, so that the loiterers in the bye streets, after getting wet through, had no other alternative but that of returning home. About twenty-five people have been arrested, and are to be tried by court-martial.

Yesterday I followed the funeral of Commander Arnaud. We passed through the quarter where he was surrounded by the mob, and close to the very spot where he was shot. M. Gambetta, who arrived in Lyons early in the morning, followed the procession, which promenade the streets of Lyons during four hours. There were, I should think, over three hundred officers present.

A day or two ago I went to the Sous-Préfecture at Autun—where the head-quarters of General Garibaldi are established—to obtain from Colonel Canzio an introduction to the Sub-Prefect of Châlons-sur-Saône, where I was going to purchase a few articles of clothing which it was absolutely impossible to obtain on the spot. I must tell you that in Autun most things, and especially winter clothes, become scarcer and scarcer every day, from the fact that the tradesmen put such little faith in the French armies, and are so dreadfully afraid of being plundered by the Germans, in the event of the former having to retreat, that they will not renew their stock in proportion as it diminishes. In the saloon of the Préfecture on the present occasion were several of the staff officers. "Are you going to Châlons, Captain?" said one; and on my answering in

the affirmative, he continued, "Bring us back some Parmesan cheese;" "And a pair of spurs for me," said another; "And some military braid," added a fourth; "And some grey cloth, some cigars, some red flannel, some flannel shirts, some novels, a bridle, &c.," chimed in the others. With several pages of my note-book filled with commissions of this nature, I hastened off to the railway station and started for Châlons-sur-Saône, in a train filled for the most part with sick soldiers, among whom there were, I am sorry to say, a large proportion of shamblers. I happened to perform a portion of the journey with two engineers from Le Creuzot, and was thus able to ascertain the exact state of the cannon foundry which has been cried up with such gross exaggeration by certain French newspapers. It appears that all the preparations for founding the cannons and mitrailleuses are now complete, and that the foundry is able to turn out three mitrailleuses a week, as well as a considerable number of cannons. Thirty batteries of small pieces which have been ordered by the Government at Bordeaux are almost ready, but up to the present time nothing has actually been delivered.

At Châlons-sur-Saône, a town of about 20,000 inhabitants, I made the acquaintance of the Citoyen Cotti, the Sub-Prefect. Cotti belongs to a Corsican family, the different members of which have, I am told, since the time of the First Napoleon, been the most bitter enemies of the Bonaparte family. At the age of seventeen the present Sub-Prefect was one of the victims of the *coup d'état*. There is nothing remarkable about Châlons-sur-Saône, with the exception, perhaps, that even in ordinary times it is one of the dullest and most uninteresting towns in France. At the present time it has neither troops nor artillery, and it was only the

day that I was there that the National Guard was armed.

I was not long in discovering that the inhabitants possessed about the same amount of courage and confidence as those of Autun. At several large cloth warehouses which I visited in my search after grey cloth, I found that a large portion of the goods had been hidden away in the cellars and elsewhere, and only a few pieces left in the shop. At the Hôtel des Trois Moineaux, where I passed the night, mattresses and bronze clocks were somewhat scarce. The beds were made up of the ordinary spring mattress, and only one woollen bed, instead of three or four, as is customary in France, showing that at Châlons the inhabitants possessed as little confidence in the armies sent by the Provisional Government to stop the German advance upon Lyons as elsewhere. I am, however, bound to say that the popularity of General Garibaldi was great. Everywhere that I went I heard the good and honest old General praised up to the skies. "Had it not been for Garibaldi," they exclaimed, "we should have had the Prussians here before now."

At Châlons-sur-Saône I found neither Parmesan cheese, nor spurs, nor grey cloth, nor military braid, so I decided on going as far as Macon. Here I made the acquaintance of M. Frederick Morin, the Prefect, and saw some samples of a regiment of cavalry, called the Eclaireurs of Saône and Loire, which was being formed at Macon. The regiment looks very promising. It is well mounted, which is a very important matter. The uniform consists of a coarse blue flannel blouse faced with red, cord trousers and boots, a kepi, and a cloak with a hood. Each man is armed with a sabre, a Remington carbine (an excellent arm, which, in my opinion, is superior to the Chassepôt), and a revolver. One or two companies of the regiments are already with

General Cr mer, and were probably turned to account in the battle of Nuits. At Macon I found a population so enthusiastic in its praise of the Garibaldians, that I and a captain of the general's staff, whom I met at the H tel de l'Europe, could hardly appear in the street without attracting a considerable crowd, who followed us about wherever we went, shouting "Vivent les Garibaldians!" "Vive Garibaldi!"

I had intended, on reaching Macon, to proceed to Chamb ry, where I had heard that General Frapoli was forming an army; for the ex-Colonel Frapoli, being unable to come to an understanding with General Garibaldi, has been promoted to the grade of general by M. Gambetta, who is a Freemason, like Frapoli, and one of his intimate friends. I was told at Macon that Frapoli was at Lyons, so I decided on coming here, principally with a view of seeing what kind of army, or rather corps, Frapoli was getting together.

This is the second time that I have been in Lyons. My first visit was made only a few months ago, just before the declaration of the present war. On that occasion I formed one of a party of journalists who were invited by the Commission of the Lyons Exhibition of 1871 to report on the progress of the works. I remember that, at Macon, a cold supper was spread in the buffet, and that the train was stopped for our convenience while we took our coffee, which must have been a most disagreeable thing for the other travellers; but in those days we were under Imperial sway, and the station-master was a most important individual. Since my last visit to Lyons nothing has changed, if I except the coloured head mounted upon what looks very much like a broomstick—probably an emblem of democracy—and which is placed upon the balcony of the H tel de Ville, surmounted by a blood-red flag. I was somewhat

surprised to find the music-halls and theatres not only open to the public, but crowded. This struck me the more as one evening, at Autun, when Ricciotti Garibaldi, Col. Canzio, and myself, together with several officers of the staff, among whom was a tenor of the Milan Opera, went to a certain pastrycook's shop near the Place du Champ de Mars, with a view of playing a few patriotic songs, the proprietor of the establishment came upstairs in person to remind us that the country was bleeding, and that he could not think of allowing the piano to be touched.

I reached Lyons at 6 P.M., two hours behind time, and passed the evening at the Casino Music-hall. The entertainment consisted of the usual vulgar, and, I may say, immoral songs, which generally form the répertoire of establishments of this description, followed by the *Clodoche Cancon*, and a woman almost naked who danced a *Chakut à la Finnette*. I had not been long in Lyons before I was surrounded by an anxious crowd hungry for news. "News?" I answered, in reply to the questions which greeted me on every side, "there is none. We have fortified Autun as well as we have been able, and with our three batteries of 8-pounders shall do what we can to resist the enemy."—"What?" said one, "have you not heard that Dijon has been occupied by the united forces of Crémer and Garibaldi?" I answered that I had not; that I had breakfasted with the Prefect of Dijon in the morning, and that he had received no news of that nature. It is now over two years since I have given up arguing with Frenchmen, so that the matter dropped. My Lyonnais friends had got it into their heads that a brilliant victory had been gained, and of course set me down as a straggler who had made off before the action. Later in the evening came the news of the evacuation of Nuits by General

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Crémer, followed by news of the general retreat, and the heavy losses sustained by the 1st and 2nd Legions of the department of the Rhône. The following day the newspapers came out with reports of the battle of Nuits, but, like most French accounts of battles, it was difficult to understand anything save that the French troops had displayed the most prodigious valour, and had been beaten. I have since been able to get together the following account of what really occurred about 8 A.M. on Sunday morning: The French advanced posts, which had been removed to *Grandes-Baraques*, near Gevrey-Chambertin, situated exactly half-way between Nuits and Dijon, at a distance of eleven kilomètres from each town, were attacked by a Prussian column coming either from Dijon or from the entrenched camp at Marsannay. Up to 11 A.M. the French troops, who were commanded by General Crémer in person, held their positions, but at that hour a countryman came to tell them that another Prussian column was advancing rapidly along the road to Citeaux, threatening to cut them off unless they retired upon Nuits. They had hardly reached Nuits when they saw the column in question coming out of the woods of Gilly-les-Citeaux, and almost at the same time a third column appeared on the opposite side of the French positions. The third column was repulsed without difficulty, and the French attack was then directed, at about 2 P.M., upon the first and second Prussian columns, which were united. The battle commenced between Nuits and the village of Boncourt, which was subsequently burnt. During the retreat to Nuits, several of the French wounded fell into the hands of the enemy. Up to 3 P.M. the enemy's advance was stopped, but the French say that at that hour the Germans received reinforcements, and placing them-

selves on the offensive with renewed vigour, advanced as far as Nuits, and occupied several houses in the faubourgs. At 3.30 the 57th Regiment of the Line arrived upon the scene of action—too late, however, to be of any service. The French, nevertheless, tried a bayonet charge as a last effort, and on being repulsed with considerable loss, retired first of all to the heights, and then to Beaune. Some accounts say that General Cr  mer had with him 5,000 to 6,000 men; others, that he had 10,000. The Prussian forces are estimated at from 20,000 to 25,000 men, and eight batteries of artillery. The French newspapers, unable to give an estimate of the killed and wounded on their own side, affect, nevertheless, to be informed of the losses of the enemy, which they state as being 5,000 men, among whom they say is a Grand Duke of somewhere.

When I left Autun, there was a perfect understanding between General Cr  mer and Garibaldi. How was it that General Garibaldi was not called upon to assist General Cr  mer? Why is it that M. Gambetta—this advocate who has taken upon himself the responsibility of directing the military operations—leaves Garibaldi with only three batteries of 8-pounders, one of which is a small mountain battery drawn by mules? Why is it that our soldiers are without overcoats and shoes, and our paymaster without money? Probably, because M. Gambetta, who passed as a just and honest man during the Empire, intends continuing the system he adopted with regard to Garibaldi when the Government first accepted his services—namely, that of tying him hand and foot and telling him to walk, for fear that people should say afterwards, "Garibaldi saved France."

CHAPTER XVI.

CHRISTMAS was approaching, and the crisis of the siege of Paris was still deferred. The longer the investment lasted the larger grew the total of the stores reputed to have been accumulated for the supply of the inhabitants. In September Paris was told that it could hold out two months. In December it was assured it had still left provisions for three. It was no secret that the German leaders were greatly disappointed, and that all the virtue of the most disciplined soldiery in the world was necessary to enable them to support the delay with resignation. In Germany some of the journals began to criticise the operations which for four months they had only admired. Count Moltke, it was said, was presuming upon fortune, instead of taking guarantees against its caprices, and must have failed to obtain accurate information as to the food supplies of Paris before he commenced the siege. Then, moreover, why had the French capital not been bombarded? It was no kindness to the Parisians to forbear the shelling of the city; whereas, since it was certain that Paris would yield as soon as it found that its life and property lay under the fire of the German artillery, a bombardment would cause lives to be spared which otherwise would perish by famine and disease. These questioners assumed, for the purpose of their argument, a difference of opinion between the King and his military advisers, and it was said at Berlin that the Prussian soldiers before Paris were

being sacrificed to the humane susceptibilities of the King, who would not permit the bombardment of a city containing so many women and children. The truth was, that a miscalculation had been made at the German head-quarters. It had been believed that the Parisians, shut in by themselves, cut off from the provinces which they had been accustomed to lead, deprived of a thousand conveniences and enjoyments which had been regarded as parts of their very life, would become restless and ungovernable, and that, after a few riots, in which they had made and remade half a dozen governments, they would despatch a deputation to Versailles praying the King of Prussia to send a Grand Duke into the city with 100,000 men to maintain order. But the event proved entirely otherwise. Paris was never more easily governed than during the siege, although it was necessary to extend the administration of the executive to the very cellars and cupboards of the people; and the Germans at length found that, in order to take Paris, they must rely on themselves alone. The failure of Count Moltke's summons of December 5th—for a summons it really was—to induce General Trochu to treat for a capitulation or a peace, led to a reconsideration of the whole conduct of the siege, and from that time a great increase of energy was seen in the conveyance of heavy guns and siege ammunition to the lines before Paris. During the whole of December the German engineering staff was very actively employed, and by the middle of the month correspondents from before Paris employed themselves in fixing the day for the bombardment of the French capital.

In the meantime General Trochu and his colleagues had not been idle. The defeat of the Army of the Loire at a time when it seemed to be approaching Paris to raise the siege, had been felt as a grievous disappointment; but the Army of the North was assuming dimensions and, as was

believed, an efficiency which would enable it to render important services to Paris. Even as early as the second week in December, it had left Lille under General Faidherbe, and had surprised a portion of a railway division with fifty infantry at Ham, and had caused them to sign articles of capitulation in regular form. Faidherbe had passed La Fère and St. Quentin in his march, and was believed to be descending upon the main line of the communications of the great besieging army, when suddenly he retraced his steps and advanced in the direction of Paris. In his despatch of December 14th, from Bourges, M. Gambetta had written:—

“In the north Faidherbe will have retaken La Fère, and found large stores of ammunition and provisions with guns. But we are very anxious about you. It is now more than a week since we received any news of you, whether from yourselves, from the Prussians, or from abroad. The cable with England is not acting. What is happening? Take advantage of this south-west wind to send a balloon which will fall in Belgium, and so put an end to our solicitude. The Prussian retreat is a movement about which there can be no mistake. If we can only hold out—and we can if we have only the will—we shall beat them. They have already suffered enormous losses; and I learn from the most trustworthy sources that they experience the greatest difficulty in obtaining supplies of food. But to triumph we must resign ourselves to supreme sacrifices without murmuring, and fight even to the death.”

The patriotic confidence of M. Gambetta was betrayed by fortune. Faidherbe did not retake La Fère, and the Prussians were not retreating; but General Trochu determined to place himself in the best position, either to hold out a hand to Faidherbe if he should approach the German

lines before Paris, or to detain the troops of the investing army, so that they might not be able to assist General Manteuffel against the French Army of the North. The Germans saw the preparations of the enemy two days before the French movement was actually made, as letters from before Paris, dated December 18th, showed; and as if this were not enough warning, a Paris balloon fell within their lines, containing an official despatch from General Trochu, stating that a great sortie would be made on the 20th. The sorties of November 28th and December 2nd had proved terrible failures; but the Parisian journals clamoured for their renewal. General Ducrot had said, on the former occasion, "this circle of iron, which has surrounded us now too long, threatens to stifle us in a slow agony;" and it threatened still.

The newspapers, recalling these words, argued: "We have here an army of 300,000 men, with a formidable artillery, and we do nothing. We neither try to pierce the lines, nor to raise the siege, nor even risk partial actions in order to kill as many Prussians as possible. We are losing time, we are eating up our stores, and we are not pushing on the work of deliverance. This inaction is deplorable. We shall always have more men than are wanted to defend positions which are never attacked. Why are cannon being made by thousands, and projectiles by hundreds of thousands, if they are not to be used? At the commencement of the month you destroyed 20,000 Prussians. What prevents you doing the same every week? It is of no use to disguise the fact, in the terrible position in which we and they find ourselves; it is only by killing, and killing again, that we shall be able to oblige them to loose their grip. The prospect is a horrible one, but the responsibility falls upon those who render it necessary. Let us make a bold effort, for there are moments when temerity is the highest wisdom, and when it is

better to fail and perish than to perish ignobly and shamefully of hunger."

On the 17th December General Trochu published the following address to the army:—

"Officers, Sub-officers, and Soldiers,—We have in common made efforts for our country which have served our sacred cause. Our brothers of the Army of the Loire, who have been inspired by the patriotism of the provinces, as the Army of Paris has been inspired by the patriotism of Paris, give us an admirable example. Like us, they 'renew themselves' under fire at the price of heroic sacrifices in a struggle which astonishes the enemy, troubled by the enormity of his losses and the indomitable energy of the resistance which he encounters. May these noble encouragements sustain you! May the grand spectacle of the citizens of Paris—soldiers like you, fighting with you in the close union of peril and danger—elevate you to the height of every duty and every danger! May your general infuse into your souls the hopes, the sentiments, and the firm resolutions with which his own is filled!

"TROCHU."

The active army of Paris at this time consisted of about 230,000 men. After the capitulation of Sedan, General Vinoy led about 28,000 men from Mezières to Paris; 40,000 old soldiers and men from the dépôts were got together, and to these were added 15,000 young recruits from the two last contingents, making in all about 83,000 men. The Paris Garde Mobile numbered 40,000 men, and those of the Garde Mobile of the provinces which were in Paris 90,000 more. The Navy furnished 10,000 men, and the Free Corps 20,000 more. This composite force of 243,000 men—Line, Mobile Guards, and Navy—had been diminished by about 12,000 men in the two sorties of November and December. A number of

battalions of the Sedentary National Guard of Paris had already been constituted war battalions; but it was only at a later period of the siege that their military capabilities were severely tested.

The Correspondent at Versailles thus wrote on the 21st, when his colleague on the north-east side of Paris was very differently occupied :—

The shortest day of the year finds us, where the bright afternoons in September found us, waiting before Paris. Three months ago yesterday the great army of the Germans circled round the city, and all communication was cut off, and all supplies were stopped. I shall be slow to forget the exciting impression of that first arrival on the heights of Meudon, and that first glance over the white houses, and domes, and towers of Paris. It then seemed certain that the Parisians would yield so soon as they realized their peril. They might be shelled. Was not that enough for them? Their daily newspapers would be deprived of news, their coffee would lose its flavour in the dulness of the time, and Paris would yield with tears of joy at being spared to fight some other day. Such were the prospects of September 20—when the Crown Prince rode up to the Préfecture on the Avenue de Paris. What are the prospects on December 21—when German uniforms have become as familiar to Versailles as the tall figures of the Life Guardsmen are to Knightsbridge? The answer is simple. Paris is more likely to hold out six weeks now than she seemed likely to hold out six days on September 20. The Parisians have risen to some extent to the measure of their destiny. We are in presence of a population which begins to feel proud of what it has achieved, and there will only be a surrender when such is absolutely necessary. But we know so little of what happens in the beleaguered

place, that I will speak rather of the progress of those who shut it in. Whilst only a faint echo of the resolution of the garrison reaches Versailles, there is here a full-toned shout of the stern desire of the Germans for glory and for revenge. They may be long delayed, but they are not going to let their prize slip through their fingers. If six weeks must be given to the task, six weeks shall be spent before Paris. If two months, or three months for that matter, the time can be spared. General Trochu must make up his mind to cut an opening in the German line, or must defend himself to the last in hopes of being helped from the Loire. By mere persistence in holding out, he will never drive away these firm obstinate besiegers. They did not attack him at first because they thought the works of Paris too strong to be easily silenced, and therefore chose the more cautious line of a well-armed blockade, of circumvallation, one might almost say, in old-world fashion. But they always could have tried their guns against Paris, and perhaps they will do so yet. I think the cry in Germany to bombard somewhat unreasonable. Surely the generals whose fame depends on success are doing their best to win. We should remember, however, that some confusion exists as to what "bombardment" means. The Germans who call for vigour, and the English public which deprecates severe measures, have in mind a burning up of dwellings to make non-combatants scream for surrender. But the bombarding which I understand to be probable in regard to the Parisian outworks is an artillery attack upon French artillerists, with a view to be in a position to threaten harsher measures.

The deputies of the North German Parliament dined with the King on Sunday evening—the evening of the day of the address—and were taken up next

morning to the front to show them Paris. After their return from this glimpse of the great siege, they were entertained at dinner by the Crown Prince, and on Tuesday they commenced their journey home. It was a short but most successful visit to head-quarters, a visit favoured by fine weather, and in which the object of the deputation was nearly carried out. No accident or illness hindered the ceremony that had such deep meaning for Germans. The Crown Prince of Prussia and the other Princes, the Generals, and Ministers were able to assist at the reading of the loyal address. Bismarck was there to see his plans bear fruit. Moltke was among the deputies, as an "honorary member," because he was Moltke, and because, though not one of the deputation, he has a seat in the House. The same compliment was paid to a distinguished official, a "pacificator of kingdoms," as the Chinese would call him, M. de Brauchitsch, the German Prefect of the Seine-et-Oise. There was method in the arrangement of the brilliant group at the top of the room, as much as there was remembrance of place and of person among the deputies who filled in the circle round Herr Simson whilst he read. The deputies had their honorary colleagues, the Princes were marshalled with all the exactness of a full-dress parade. To the right of King William stood his son and the other hereditary Princes. To the left stood the reigning Grand Dukes and Dukes of several German Duchies. The three lesser Kings of Germany were not present, but it was at the instance of one of them—the King of Bavaria—that the question of the Imperial Crown had been mooted, and when the South German Parliament shall have joined in the movement, there will be no backwardness in the South German sovereigns to play their parts.

Dec. 22.—The King and his son, with Prince Adalbert, Admiral of the Fleet, have this morning inspected the Prussian sailors detached to Versailles. I happened to be passing at the moment, and saw at once that something must be going on by the gathering of people at the corner of the Avenue de Paris and the Rue St. Pierre. There was a small crowd of French and German loungers, braving the bleakest of December winds, and the dust of the great avenue blew fiercely against a line of sturdy seamen drawn up before the Préfecture. I have spoken in other letters of the historical memories which will cling to Versailles after these wonderful events of 1870. We can scarcely appreciate how men in after years will look back on the deeds of King William and Bismarck, of Trochu and Gambetta. We can scarcely appreciate the greatness of the drama which is played at our very doors. Here were the German sailors, armed with needle-guns and carrying knapsacks in military fashion, drawn up before the Palace which Napoleon built for his Imperial Prefect, to be inspected by William of Hohenzollern. A "naval brigade" is the hobby of successful campaigns in modern times. Prince Adalbert has been for a long while at headquarters, and now the sailors have appeared in force. But stay, I must come to details, or you will think that I speak of thousands instead of hundreds. In this case I speak of, about a hundred Prussian sailors, with some half-dozen officers, were drawn up before the Préfecture. There was no great formality about the inspection, though my foolish steed chose to take offence at the naval uniforms—the knapsacks and wide-brimmed hats—and to bear me at random among the observant natives. There was a well-ordered line of blue-jackets waiting for the King, and he came with right Royal punctuality. No late hours for the old soldier of 1815. No hanging

back by the Crown Prince, or the Prince Admiral. It was as chilly a morning as you could well imagine, and I thought myself "jolly under creditable circumstances" in riding towards the outposts at this early hour. But here was the future Emperor, and here were the Princes, calm and cheerful at anything o'clock A.M. The Royal party issued from the gate of the Préfecture, and passed along the line of sailors with lingering steps. It is all for the soldiers now, it may be all for the sailors in another war, or rather Germany may take her true place as a nation equally strong by sea as by land. She has so large a merchant shipping that her present naval inferiority to France is a mistake. The German Empire of twenty years 'hence will not only have an irresistible army, but a navy which can carry the troops to any given point, and this will be, we may hope, a guarantee of European peace.

The sailors drawn up before the Préfecture have been the cause of much speculation, and of many a wild rumour in Versailles. Some people insist on their being destined for service in the batteries; others—French, of course—suppose that the Prussian army is so reduced that sailors must, perforce, be employed to strengthen the diminished battalions. There is yet a probable report which assigns these lads in wide-brimmed hats to the captured gunboats of the Loire. This last is, I believe, the real solution of their presence at head-quarters. It would delight the Germans beyond everything to achieve a victory, however small, on the element which they hope to make their own. The sphere of the Loire is somewhat restricted, but there is a chance that, even with a few tiny gunboats, a dashing officer might do some good service below Tours as the ally of the dreaded "Uhlands."

I was struck by the hearty and cheerful look of King William when he inspected the German sailors. He

had seemed a little more anxious and thoughtful when the news of the bloody work early in the month was arriving at Versailles, and now his air was decidedly free from care. Though no crushing victory has been gained, the Army of the Loire has been well answered for, and the question of Paris seems now again to be a mere question of time. Whatever grave doubts, or grave questions, to settle may remain, there is not the pressing difficulty of an attempt to raise the siege. I have said that the King looked cheerful this morning, and the same may be stated of his Highness the Crown Prince. As to the Prince Admiral, he beamed with satisfaction. Here were his sailors at last getting a chance of useful work.

Your ideas of the tranquil stagnation of head-quarters would have received a rude shock yesterday afternoon. Squads of infantry, in forage caps, and, as usual, with bayonets fixed, guarded street after street, house after house, whilst a grand search was made for "contraband of war." *Mauvais sujets* of all sorts were sought for, and Versailles was cleared of her roughs at a sweep. Arms also were incidentally found, and I hear rumours of a French officer who had escaped from prison having been hunted out. The chief object was to rid the place of a dangerous class of its inhabitants. M. le Maire himself cannot much have regretted such a riddance; and as to the more timid citizens, they are delighted to be free from a dangerous class. They were not best pleased at first—before they "twigged" the proceeding, for soldiers on guard at house doors and street corners are viewed askance by every one not in uniform. The hotels were entered and the forage caps of the searching party appeared at one point after another with unsparing persistence. The soldiers were very quiet and good-natured where I saw them; and as to the reported vio-

lence in some parts of Versailles, I fancy that it was supposed to exist from inability to understand one another, rather than from a hostile feeling on the soldiers' part. They seem to me to take the whole thing quite coolly as a matter of ordinary fatigue duty.

We have heard some sharp firing to the east or north-east of Paris, and it is said that the French have put forward a feeler towards Le Bourget, but as yet there are no details of the affair. The only thing is that I hear that prisoners have been taken, so there has probably been some sort of fight at the outworks. An expectation has been entertained of a German attack upon the French outworks to the eastward, and it may be that this attack has just begun, or that the French, seeing themselves threatened, have issued forth again to dispute the ground in their immediate front. One sortie is so likely to be followed by another, that I shall ride out to the south-eastern face of the fortress to see how things go near the Seine.

The last paragraph of this letter shows how little the great sortie of the 21st had disturbed the ordinary course of daily life at Versailles. For all that, it was a serious effort on the part of the French generals, and led to a rapid development of their siege operations by the Germans. In the King of Prussia's telegrams to Berlin, the sortie was described as made against Stains, Le Bourget, and Sevran. The Special Correspondent with the Army of the Crown Prince of Saxony, writing in the middle of the conflict, thus describes the encounter:—

Clicky, Dec. 21, 12 o'clock, Noon.—I am writing amidst the roar of a general artillery engagement, extending all round the north-east and eastern sides of the line, and know not when the room I am writing in, the windows of which have already been broken by a shell bursting

outside, may become untenable. A good friend routed me out of a comfortable bed in Lagny this morning at six o'clock, with the information that fighting was imminent. Taking at once to horse, I heard nothing as I rode for the first two miles, but had abundant confirmation everywhere that my friend's intelligence was good. I overtook a pontoon train going at a trot towards Chelles; the officer believed that that was the point to be threatened, and the bridge might be useful to facilitate the passage of succours from the region of Champs, Malnoue, and Villiers. At Le Pin I found the three field batteries of the 24th Division quartered there, limbered up and taking the road. Their orders were likewise for Chelles, and I was tempted to accompany them. But as I spoke with the officers, there came down on the wind the sound of heavy firing from the direct front towards Clichy, and so I resisted the impulse to go to Chelles, where there is undoubtedly the most tempting district for an infantry attack, and headed up the slope to General Montbe's head-quarters here. The terrace of the château he inhabits commands a noble view of the whole country as far as Dugny and Gonesse, and this country is the theatre of the cannonade going on as I write. By eight o'clock, when I arrived, the fire was continuous. The centre of the German position is that fortified camp between Sevrans and Le Blanc Mesnil which I have described in your columns; and around Aulnay, in the very middle of that stretch, are the batteries chiefly concentrated. Our force engaged there, so far as I can learn, is as follows:—Three batteries of the Guards Artillery, three batteries contributed by the 23rd Division of the 12th Army Corps, and three or four batteries of the Artillery Division of the 12th Army Corps. There are reserve batteries in addition to this, but not engaged. Infantry

and cavalry supports are partly drawn out, partly standing ready in their quarters. The 103rd Regiment, the garrison of Clichy, are on the plateau of Raincy, to watch the French infantry that have been observed concentrating in Bondy.

The French artillery seems engaged all round. Avron is firing over Villemomble at Clichy and Montfermeil, and Fort Noisy is vigorously following suit. Forts Romanvilliers and Aubervilliers are playing on Livry and the vicinity, and the latter is throwing fire also in combination with de l'Est into Le Bourget. The French infantry stand concentrated between Bondy and Baubigny, one demonstration towards Clichy, and another towards Chelles, having been arrested early in the morning.

3.30 P.M.—With the above as preface, I must just enclose you the leaves torn out of my note-book, for the post leaves almost at once. All, however, seems restored to comparative quiet as I write, and the French are driven back at all points. There has during the day been no infantry fighting to speak of. One exception is mentioned in my notes. The 103rd exchanged several volleys with a body which made a rush out of Bondy, about nine in the morning, but sustained little loss, and drove the enemy back. I cannot think but that the loss throughout the day has been trivial. Here are the leaves from my note-book:—

8.45 A.M.—Aubervilliers de l'Est and St. Denis seem to be concentrating the fire on Le Bourget. Six or eight French batteries have formed line with their left on Drancy, and are partly firing obliquely into Le Bourget at very short range, partly firing on the German line behind the inundations. I see shells bursting in Pont Iblon, also behind our batteries in Aulnay. French fire quite furious—half a dozen guns flashing out at once. It seems wild though. Ours as regular as the beats

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of the pendulum of a clock. An occasional shell from Avron.

9 A.M.—A rattle of musketry comes on the wind. It sounds from Le Bourget. Are the French infantry pressing on the battalion of Guards occupying it? It sounds like it. It grows louder, and then there is a lull. It springs up again nearer Pont Iblon. The Guards must be in retreat towards Pont Iblon. The hellish shell-fire concentrated on the place was enough of itself to drive them out. There are the shells bursting all along the road towards Pont Iblon. They must mark the line of the retreating Guards—the shells following as they fall back. Now it seems as if they were safe behind Pont Iblon, for the batteries above the causeway through the inundations now open, their way free probably, since friends are no longer in front of their muzzles.

10 A.M.—The French, in the teeth of Pont Iblon's fire, have got up batteries on the *chaussée* before Le Bourget, and must be exchanging shots with the Pont Iblon batteries at point-blank range. A battery of ours at Sevran begins to speak in the direction of Bondy. I can see the shells from Aulnay bursting in the middle of the French batteries at Drancy, as the wind for the moment blows the smoke away. The gunners must some of them have gone in little pieces with that one. Still they hold their ground. Fire seems opening out towards us from Avron, and now and then I hear the waspish song of a Chassepôt bullet.

10.30 A.M.—The French are brightening up all round. The forts are, without exception, firing as hard as they can. That white smoke I see in the far distance must be the Lunette de Stains playing into the village of the same name. Why isn't there a sharp-toothed battery on the height above it? Does the firing go farther

round towards Montmorency and Epinay? I cannot tell for certain; but the direction of the noise and the smoke would argue as much.

11 A.M.—Both sides at it ding-dong. No advantage on either side. Putting out of sight the forts, the French have the greatest strength of artillery engaged. I can make out, as I reckon, eighteen field batteries. The line of guns to the right of Drancy is lengthening. How they do fire, to be sure! Can they be aiming as they blaze away with such rapidity? Splash—splash—I see now with the glass most of their shells are bursting in the inundation in front of our position in Aulnay. That will break no bones. Why, they have set the Forest of Bondy on fire, on their own side of the water! If they mean to follow up with infantry, this will inconvenience them, if they are not salamanders. Kr-r-r-r, kr-r-r-r—one ought to know that sound if he ever heard it before. Where can they have got their mitrailleuses at work? That means close quarters. Have they got their infantry edged forward on the sly at some point we can't see here, and are they backed up by the mitrailleuse? Why, the sound is from two points at once. The glass explains the mystery. Near Drancy, and on to Sevran, if it were not for the interruptions, runs the Soissons Railway. Here, by Bondy, and so round to Villemomble and Gagny, runs the Cherbourg lines. As I live, there is a mitrailleuse train on each line! General Montbe sees it first—the locomotive puff-puffing out from behind the trees of Drancy, having the mitrailleuse waggons before it. There goes the kr-r-r-r again! The concern is playing dodging tactics—it comes out to fire, and scuttles back to load. Another mitrailleuse train is at the same game on our left front—on the Cherbourg line—that is the song of some of the bullets. I wonder how Von Schönberg and Hammerstein, and

the rest of the 103rd fellows on Raincy are relishing their closer contiguity.

Noon.—An orderly rides in with the information that in the direction of Noisy-le-Grand French infantry are pushing forward, and that a battery is established, and has opened fire in the same place, up the valley against Chelles; also that all the batteries south of Avron are at work playing on the horseshoe. This has a serious meaning. The artillery in the neighbourhood of Chelles will be able to honour none of our drafts now, if we should want them. We may need them. The fire is as hot as ever, the French activity seeming unabated. Our guns are pounding away in a steady business-like way—they won't spurt. Artillery spurts never pay,—infantry spurts sometimes, but not so often as is generally thought. The "walruses" by Sevrans are asleep—it is evident we are not firing a gun that is not a field one.

12.45 P.M.—Here comes a 24th Division battery past Clichy towards Sevrans. It is one of those that left Le Pin in the morning. This is reassuring as to the state of things to our south by Chelles and the horseshoe. The battery could not well be spared if it were very hot there. A shell—it must have come from Fort Noisy—bursts in the battery as it traverses the space at our feet between Clichy and Livry; one horse—a detachment beast—is down, that is all. They have got the range either from Avron or Noisy, perhaps from both. Where we are standing is hot quarters now. Bang! General, you are not hurt, are you? A close shave, in all conscience,—a 24 lb. shell came right in amongst us, alighting among the stacked arms of a picket, and sending the needle-guns flying right and left, and for that matter the men too: not a soul hurt, but all smothered with gravel and mud. I don't care about a piece for a souvenir, thank

you, Herr Lieutenant. I shan't forget the shave in a hurry. Are you a married man, General Montbe?

1 P.M.—Our firing is telling. The batteries on the Le Bourget *chaussée* are shutting up. They are retreating. What is that burst of black smoke behind them? The French must be trying to burn Le Bourget. They have succeeded so far; there is a jet of fire, but the place must be washed, surely, in the composition ballet-girls use for their skirts—it won't take to burning kindly. I suppose it is the wet straw that raises so dense a smoke.

1.30 P.M.—A lull. The French must be changing position. The lull is only on their side, ours is pegging away as if driven by steam. There are the Le Bourget batteries again, much nearer the village; they must have limbered up and been falling back, and suddenly unlimbered again.

1.45 P.M.—There is a gap in the line of batteries on the right of Drancy. The centre batteries seem to have dropped out. What is the artillery order? If it was cavalry, I should say they were retiring by columns of troops from the centre. The flank batteries have wakened up again as hot as ever—to cover the movements of the others, no doubt.

2.30 P.M.—French all but silenced, and in full retreat. All the firing we now see is our guns milling away steadily as if paid by the piece, and the French forts of de l'Est, du Nord, and Aubervilliers. In the distance, under the hill of Ecouen, which shuts in the horizon, I see smoke rising. Perhaps Dugny or Gagny may have been fired. Perhaps a shell has lodged in a straw-stack.

3 P.M.—Hardly anything audible to our north front. Noise still from direction of Montfermeil, Chelles, and the south. The neighbourhood of Clichy, for the time, seems to be attracting exceptionally hot fire. Shells are falling on the slope below us with disagreeable frequency.

3.45 P.M.—Everything quieter. The General thinks of going out towards Raincy, and I shall accompany him.

Evening.—To save to-day's post, I this afternoon tore from my note-book the memoranda made from hour to hour of the artillery battle which had been raging from an early hour, and sent them on just as I had jotted them down. I scarcely like to reflect on the manner in which they must have read, if indeed they could have been read at all, but as they were all I had on which to base a connected narrative, the want of them forbids that undertaking now.

The visit to Raincy, which was contemplated when I sent off my first parcel, was not carried out. Although in other parts of the line, at least to the northward, the firing seemed to be dying away as the twilight came on, shells continued to be thrown towards Clichy, with perhaps greater frequency than in the earlier part of the afternoon. About five o'clock the fire from the German guns about Aulnay, which had been dying away as it ceased to evoke a response, suddenly flared up again, and continued very brisk for about a quarter of an hour. It appeared to me as if the French were disposed to halt at least some of their batteries for the night in advance of the position out of which they had come in the morning, and that the warm fire of their opponents was intended to prevent the execution of this design. The French guns, which had been utterly silent for half an hour, could not refrain from replying to this fire, however feebly, and they were unlimbered—a couple of batteries, in the flat some distance to the north-east of Baubigny. It was very pretty, in the all but darkness, to watch the rapid flashes, and the shells bursting in the air, like a comet that has knocked out his brains against some aerial rock. But the pyrotechnic display was not of long continuance. The German fire was too

steady and rapid to admit of a lengthened illumination of the inundation waters on the part of the French by the bursting shells on their margin. All grew silent and dark again over against Baubigny, and it was as if the French array—the forts, whose grey embrasures were visible in the daylight, the serried batteries of artillery which had maintained their share of the day's din with so much spirit, and the dense battalions of infantry, men who had done nothing all day but hold themselves in reserve—as if all these were blotted off the black face of the night. But not for long. From the far-off firing platform of Fort de l'Est suddenly flashed out the electric light, followed by a flash that heraded the dull thud which, as it seemed quite a minute after, struck the ear. At what de l'Est was firing we could not tell—if indeed at anything, and not in pursuance of that Gascon custom to which the Paris forts are addicted of having the “last word” in every affair, no matter what its issue. Presently there rose against the sky another light farther south—directly between Clichy and Paris—a whole chain of light so numerous that they blended as in one great fire, and made the heavens bright above them. These were the bivouac fires of the French camping in the open in the position they had taken up on the previous night, their right resting on Bondy, their left on Baubigny. There they lie—fired indeed in whatever they contemplated to-day, if it was of an actively offensive nature, but still stubbornly refusing to relinquish it. They are at hand for anything. To-morrow their infantry may be raging against the needle-guns of the Saxons lying before us on Raincy. To-morrow their field artillery, changing its direction, and backed by Avron, may be pounding inconveniently into Montfermeil. To-morrow, changing its front, the Bondy-Baubigny force may be supporting

a division farther to the south or a heavy attack towards Chelles. There they lie, at all events, the object of an undefined uneasiness, in which there is no trepidation, but something of nervousness. Ah, well, sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. What is the *raison d'être* of this great powder-burning demonstration of to-day? It could hardly have been intended as an attempt to break through. Speculations in the early part of the day were various. It might be a reconnaissance in force to discover, by drawing their fire, whether the besiegers had any heavy artillery mounted on the works between Sevan and Pont Iblon, with future intentions towards the forts. It might have been that, in the knowledge of the railways being in use as far as Gonesse and Sevan, the speculation might have been ventured that to these termini were centring the siege guns, and that under a heavy artillery fire the infantry might get the chance of making a dash on an exploring and destroying expedition. But, in my opinion, the cue was given to the motive of the day's work in the terms of a communication made by General von Monbe, at his hospitable dinner-table. All day long heavy columns of French infantry, massed on and about the slope of Avron, and as far forward as Neuilly, had been threatening the gap of Chelles. I believe I have already referred to this alluvial tract as the probable area of a sortie. It presents several obvious advantages. It is quite flat, is open in the topographical sense all the way to Agny—all the way to Châlons for that matter—and the French, holding Neuilly as they do, already sit astride of the flat country, and can make their dispositions without annoyance or exposure on the same level as their succeeding operations. Then there is no river to cross. But for that somewhat sturdy obstacle, the Saxons, there would be a straight run home unobstructed by water or broken

ground all the way, as I have said, to Lagny; and behind a sallying force there stands up the formidable Avron, a most judicious bottle-holder, and something more. No doubt there are disadvantages to set against all these advantages. This world is a vale of crosses, and nobody can expect to have it all his own way. The bluff of Montfermeil enfilades a force coming up the flat towards Chelles as soon as it shows out from Neuilly. The height behind Chelles looks direct in the face of any such force; and, owing to circumstances attributable to the Germans, any contemplation of a hostile force on the part of the heights of Chelles would not be so harmless as normally is the case. These heights, too, narrow the fair way considerably, and from the outset it is the reverse of too large. Still, I have wondered that the French, who have essayed far less eligible ground for a sortie in a physical sense, should not have tried this. It was clear that I was not alone in my opinion, for Chelles was the line taken by the 24th Division artillery this morning from Le Pin. The French columns—a whole division it was known—showed opposite the gap, ready to throw themselves into it. But they knew of old the results of a concentration at any point of the deadly field artillery of the Germans. Had they come on directly, and with no diversion, what would have hindered it, but that the Saxon batteries from the Marne to the inundations, the Guards batteries from Livry to Gonesse, should have been waiting there for them across the throat of the gap at Chelles, and on the crest of Montfermeil? Wherefore was made a great artillery demonstration, supported with infantry, to look in earnest on the north-eastern face, in the hopes to draw off the artillery from the Chelles positions, and leave the coast comparatively clear for an attack. The plan might have succeeded

with a weaker artillery than that possessed by the Germans—that it did not, as it was partially successful, I am not quite prepared to assert. Anyhow, the French division, about two o'clock, thought itself justified in advancing to the attack up the northern bank of the Marne. What happened is to me as yet involved in obscurity. The sequence of General Montbe's communication was, that after a good deal of fighting up to about half-past four the French had not succeeded in gaining any ground, and had then slowly fallen back into their old position behind Neuilly. Now, however, when I come to head-quarters here, I find no concealment made of what seems to be an assured fact, that Ville Evrart and La Maison Blanche, the two keys to the Prussian outpost line athwart the alluvial plain, were taken this afternoon by the French and are now held by them; and that there is a design of retaking them to-night under cover of the darkness. It lends colour to this that the Saxon batteries lent to the Guards for Aulnay should have passed Clichy before I left it, on their way towards Chelles, accompanied by a battalion of infantry; and the movement indicates in any case an expectation on the part of the Germans that the hot work to-morrow will be in the latter neighbourhood. I have heard as yet neither tidings nor firing. It will be morning before I can obtain any further intelligence. I only hope General Montbe's version is the right one.

Many circumstances have occurred during this campaign tending to imperil the continued existence of the Geneva Convention. Another has occurred to-night. The French have collected their wounded in the village of Bondy—fearfully wounded most of them must be, for shell-splinters do not make neat holes in men—Bondy being in a line with the front of their position, and one of the keys to it in the event of that position

being assaulted, they have run up the red cross, and doubtless there would be the cry of "brutes and barbarians" if that cross were not respected. It has not been fired on, but none the less it is a flagrant abuse of the terms of the Convention, which stipulates expressly that no Feld Lazarette shall be erected in a position too near the front or of value in a military sense. Neither side has stuck closely to this definition, and the consequence is that each had stories of asserted atrocities to narrate against the other. Speaking of wounded, our losses at Clichy during the day consisted of a field-postman's foot damaged, a soldier severely wounded by a splinter, and a *Krankenträger* cut in two by a shell. The total losses on the German side must have been very small, and I cannot think the French have suffered at all severely.

It may not be new to your readers that the representatives of the British National Society at Meaux have wisely thought it their duty to break through the trammels of rules and regulations for once to administer to the pressing wants of the hordes of French prisoners passing through Lagny on their way to Germany. One must visit Lagny to appreciate the character of these needs. I was told of one batch that came in so ravenous with hunger, that the men grubbed in the gutter after turnip-tops and bones, and turned over dirt heaps in search for stray crusts of bread. At Meaux, when the train containing these unfortunates passed through, the Society people threw hams into the carriages, which were seized and worried by the ravenous men as dogs worry bones. Between wounded and prisoners, the Prussian organization for the time broke down. It is little wonder. The average daily quota of prisoners from the 1st up to the 17th was 1,000 men; the number of wounded averages little less. Lagny

did its best, but it is never a great place, and its resources have been severely taxed for months past. The cry of the great distress reached Meaux, and Captain Neville and his colleagues could not withstand it. On the 17th Mr. Barrington Kennett came on to Lagny with twenty huge cases of preserved meat, next day followed Captain Neville with 200 leviathan loaves. Mr. Kennett was left in charge of the arrangements, and every one speaks in terms of enthusiasm as to the manner in which he has accomplished what he set himself to do. The Prussian organization has righted again—it is never long on its broadside—and now it has been arranged that every prisoner on his way through shall receive a lump of bacon and another of bread, while the British Society, in case of another collapse, keep in reserve a store of preserved meat and bread for administration in that event. The horrors of Lagny for the month transcend all imagination. Fancy an average of 000 wounded men pouring in day by day—a fresh thousand every day—unfed, their wounds undressed, bitter cold, and jolted almost to distraction. There is no hospital in the place. No hospital, had it been as big as new St. Thomas's twice over, would have sufficed. Sheds, houses, railway vans, the lamp-room in the railway station, the church, the Mairie, were turned into hospitals. I saw one court-yard on which opened four or five squalid rooms. Into these eighty wounded Bavarians had perforce to be placed for the night, supperless, fireless—hopeless, I should think, in their utter misery. In one day came 1,800 wounded, nearly 100 of whom were officers. The men were put into the church—there was no other place for them. During the night a certain man was wanted particularly for some reason. Diligent search was made for him among the masses of wounded men, but it was like looking for a

needle in a bundle of hay. The search was unsuccessful. As you walk about the streets of Lagny you are continually meeting strange "mounted men." No, it is a man on the back of another, the man carried having a leg swathed in bandages. Now comes a pair carrying a man in what boys call a king's chair. All are on their way to the station, the platform of which is continually littered with a kind of luggage that makes one's heart ache. There, at full length on the litter, lie the poor broken fellows, looking up at you with their great, calm, patient eyes. I saw a clumsy fellow tumble over one of the prostrate forms, and all the chiding he received was a wan pinched smile. There is a lady at Lagny whose name deserves to be written in letters of gold wherever are recorded the names of devoted philanthropists—Madame Simon, the lady superintendent of the Saxon ambulances. Day and night has this noble woman wrestled with the torrent of human misery that has surged upon Lagny since the beginning of the month. The church of Lagny has come to strange uses: last week a refuge for 1,700 wounded men; two nights ago the barracks for 1,000 Bavarians—a new draft pressing to the front; last night the prison-house of some 1,200 Frenchmen. I went among them into the stench—stench and scene reminding me of the church of Donchéry the day after Sedan. Most of the prisoners I saw were boys—some the merest children, unable to carry a gun, much less to use one. Their guards were very kind and gentle with them, poor wretches; it would have been difficult to be harsh with creatures so utterly down and crushed.

Forepost, Forest of Bondy, before Clichy, Dec. 22.—The French are humbugs. I made sure that, in the language of Artemus Ward, we were going to have a "fite" to-day. Instead of this everything is decently quiet—

not altogether so, but quiet enough to allow of a soldier obtaining his meals by the application of fire—which is something. This morning, before leaving head-quarters, I obtained information as regarded the positions before Chelles, which satisfied me that General von Montbe had been wrong in the *couleur de rose* view he took of the position of the posts in the neighbourhood of La Maison Blanche (an old friend of mine) and Ville Evrart. Indeed I had heard yesterday afternoon, although not from head-quarters, that the French had taken these positions, but too late to include the information in my letter. It appears that at six o'clock last night the whole of the 106th Saxon Regiment simultaneously fell upon Ville Evrart and La Maison Blanche. The latter, an outpost, was first taken. The capture, including a major and five officers, the former of whom must have been making the rounds, and about fifty men. Ville Evrart followed, but it contained 500 or more defenders, who were all made prisoners. One of the enclosures in the rear of the building still remained for the night in the hands of the French; but in the morning the Saxons got possession west of this. This morning the French looked very threatening for the time; they sent forward about two batteries against Chelles, which coalesced with the troops yet remaining in Ville Evrart. But a hot fire from Noisy-le-Grand and the opposite bank of the river between it and Gournay was enough to cause a retreat with some precipitation. I would desire to describe my present position, but time will not serve. I must mention, however, that Le Bourget was retaken yesterday afternoon—I am told that it never was altogether lost—by the same regiment of the Guards who originally occupied it, along with reinforcements, and that about 300 prisoners fell to their lot. I may also state that the head-quarters'

estimate of the French loss for yesterday is about 3,000 killed and wounded ; but I think this must be an overcalculation. The French infantry seem to have retired in part from the neighbourhood of Bondy, where, however, still flies the red-cross flag. I can see the men quite easily without a glass, going about their cooking and other avocations. We are led to expect that the bombardment of Mont Avron from the batteries in the neighbourhood of Montfermeil will commence to-morrow.

Pont Iblon, in front of Gonesse, December 23.—The air was clearer yesterday than on any day within my recollection since I have been before Paris. From the advanced forepost in the Forest of Bondy, from which I looked out upon the beautiful panorama, Montmartre did not seem two miles off. I could discern the windows of the Cathedral of St. Denis far round on the right front. Bondy, directly in our front, seemed so close that you might almost send a stone the length of its church steeple, and yet the French were in it, although they kept very quiet and out of sight. Still, occasionally a few were to be seen "prowling about," and the smoke which hung in the air behind Bondy marked their camp fires. On the left front was the abrupt rise of the long ridge crowned by Forts Noisy and Rosny ; right between us and the latter is the lower blunt-headed summit which we have learned to detest under the name of Mont Avron. Noisy at intervals is wreathing itself in white smoke, which shows out in fine contrast against the blue horizon. As you watch it and the whole picture spread out before you in its loveliness, it is difficult indeed to realize that the foreground is full of fighting men, and that the smoke is the signal that a deadly missile has been sent hurtling through the air. But here comes something to remind you that smiles and peace are not synonymous. Carry him gently over

the rough ground—ah! I fear, from the look of him, he will not long feel whether he is handled roughly or tenderly. That shell you heard explode in the foreground tore half his hip away as he stood leaning against the wall; he is quivering with incipient tetanus, and the blood is dripping on to the ground as it soaks through the canvas of the stretcher. How tenderly Colonel Dietrich speaks to the poor fellow! Ah, colonel, no wonder that you sigh and turn away at that faint reply to your question, "Landwehrmann, Herr Oberst." In that word, "Landwehrmann," uttered by that poor bleeding soldier, is a volume of meaning. It means a widow and orphans, a shattered home, the breadwinner of a family struck down. There were gay lads standing about, brisk young regulars, and eighteen-year-old volunteers; but the shell spares them and whizzes straight on to the man who has mouths to fill. How one feels to hate war, as the *Krankenträger* carries the man out of our sight

The whole regiment—the 103rd—is on the foreposts to watch the French, and there is a squeeze in the little huts which have been run up to shelter the men. Strange dog-holes they are! The men are lying so close that it seems in places they are in layers among the straw. The officers have a separate place, which is nearly as full as are the huts of the men. There is a stove, but it smokes; so does everybody in the place, and you cannot discern clearly the features of the man sitting opposite to you. Faintly it is apparent that he is eating sausage with a pocket-knife. Yes, that is a tumblerful of neat rum which he is tendering you. It is so strong that it would bring the water to your eyes, only that the wood smoke has done so long ago. Somebody is asleep—at least vociferous snoring ought to be an indication of sleep. He must have tried very hard

to sleep, else he could not have been successful in the din. But, then, remember that this regiment has been on this forepost duty without a break for three whole days, and your wonder will not be that one can sleep, but that the whole are not asleep.

Here comes the orderly with the welcome order that the relief is coming, and we shall get to dinner in Major von Schönberg's château. The good major is in great fettle. He has a wife in Saxonland—a lady for whom I have an intense respect, although I do not know her. I respect her for two reasons, first, because she is the major's wife, secondly, because she has had the thoughtfulness to send her husband—by the field-post of course—a couple of barrels of Bavarian beer. These barrels are ever in the major's mind, and on his tongue. He shouts, "Hurrah for the barrels!" when the orderly brings the tidings of the relief.

The relief arrived, we returned to the château, and spent a delightful evening. The beer turned out perfection. There was a lack of beds in the château, which, however, as regarded myself, was supplemented with characteristic Saxon courtesy. A captain gave up to me his bed, and slept himself on the straw on the floor. About four in the morning I was awakened by a shake on the shoulder. As, half awake, I looked up, there stood over me, looming very large, an Uhlan, with his throat wrapped up in many and preternaturally-complicated folds of comforter. He handed me a paper, and shoved a candle under my nose. What could the man mean? Was this an order for my immediate execution, or had that rich ninety-third cousin died and left me his heir? I sleepily read over the paper, and found it was an order to turn out at once and march my company, with the rest of the brigade, to the neighbourhood of Sevrans. Where was my company? Who had a right to order

me—a free-born British Christian, and a neutral—thus peremptorily to turn out in so cold a morning? All at once I remembered I was in the captain's bed, and the sagacious idea occurred to me that the order must be intended for him. So it turned out, and the captain did the same. There was a general turn out. The 2nd Brigade of the 23rd Division consists of the 102nd and 103rd Regiments, and there being, it seemed, symptoms that the restless French contemplated another attack on Le Bourget, this brigade was ordered to march to Sevrans, to stand there in reserve in case they should be wanted. On we went, through the fiercely cold morning air—the breaths freezing into spangles on the beards, and little icicles forming on the tips of the moustaches. Everything seemed quiet. In Livry we met the Saxon Schützen Regiment going on to strengthen the Bondy foreposts. How well their black plumes looked in the grey light of the early morning! Livry, save for them, was empty. A couple of forlorn turkeys, ready plucked for Christmas, hung mournfully in a *marketender's* window. The customers had gone away, and might never come back. When the brigade reached the halting ground all was still quiet. There was nothing to be seen, and therefore I rode forward through Sevrans and Aulnay. Between these villages the *emplacements* for the field guns were all appropriately occupied, and the gunners stood at their posts; no infantry was to be seen. But as soon as I cleared Aulnay, and got up the gentle rise on the top of which runs the great Lille road, which passes through Le Bourget, it was apparent how thorough were the preparations. There were in position six or eight batteries of artillery all along the rear of the inundations, and on the slope rising behind Le Blanc Mesnil and Pont Iblon. Farther back stood other battalions in reserve. The great road itself was clear: I could

see along it right into Le Bourget, a mile and a half to the front. But right and left of it stood the battalions of infantry, eleven of them, the whole of the 2nd Division of the Guards. Here stood the pink and pride of the Prussian army—the Kaiser Franz, Kaiser Alexander, Königin Elizabeth, and Königin Augusta regiments. The Elizabeths had one battalion away out to the front there, holding Le Bourget, and have only two battalions on the ground here. The artillery consisted of that belonging to the 2nd Division, and also of the artillery division of the Grand Army Corps. At the cross-roads, as I ride on, there meets me a quaint little figure, with a knot of officers behind him. His head seems literally “in a bag;” one can see nothing but a pair of keen eyes and a pair of white moustaches. Don’t laugh at the funny-looking old man: you see before you a soldier than whom there is not a gallanter in all the German hosts—one who, though a general, ever lusts to be in the thick of the fray, fighting with his own good sword. The owner of the white moustache is General von Budritzki, the Commander of the 2nd Division of the Guards, the general with whom rests the dispositions of the day. He tells me, as I halt for a gossip with his staff, that he *fears* there will be no fighting to-day. It is clear he is longing for a brush with the troops who gave him so much trouble on the 30th of October, when it fell to him to retake Le Bourget. That same Le Bourget—out to the front on the farther side of the inundation—seems to stand strangely isolated. If the Queen Elizabeths occupying it look behind—a custom they are not addicted to—it must have a tendency to make them nervous that there is nothing in the way of supports all the way back to Pont Iblon. But behind Pont Iblon there are supports enough in all conscience. Depend on it, the Elizabeths will stick to Le Bourget as long as

they can; and if they have to fall back, they will only entice the French forward into the half-burnt, half-shattered man-trap. A French occupation of Le Bourget, always temporary, simply means so many French prisoners.

It is now one o'clock, and looking forward towards Drancy I see no move on the part of the French, whose fires are smoking in front of Baubigny. Behind us, in Pont Iblon, there stand the Guards, waiting in the cold for whatever may turn up. I think, for my own part, that nothing will turn up, and that we shall all go home to dinner. I know Major von Schönberg is thinking of the beer again as he stands in that breezy meadow beside Sevrans.

The chief loss of the day before yesterday was sustained by the 1st Battalion of the Queen Elizabeth Regiment, old friends and good friends of mine. The battalion, which your readers may remember headed the attack which retook Le Bourget on the 30th of October, has again had terrible reason to remember that village. Of its remnant of officers left, five more went down the day before yesterday, and 117 men were killed and wounded. The chief, Hauptmann von Altmann, seems to bear a charmed life. He had, on the 30th October, fourteen bullet-holes through his loose mackintosh, and not a single wound. The day before yesterday his officers fell around him, but he never was touched. I have to record a severe mishap to a very dear friend, young Freiherr von Brockdorff, a lieutenant in the Kaiser Franz Regiment, and the nephew of General von Moltke. He was shot through the chest near the close of the action of the day before yesterday. A brighter lad I never knew. He was a student at college, in Berlin, when the war broke out, and joined the army at once. He had won his commission and the iron cross. Now the war has brought

him something else. I have just seen him. He is lying nearly comatose, and very weak. He believes it was the splinter of a shell that drilled the jagged hole in his side; but I think it must have been a stray Chassepôt bullet, or one of the mitrailleuse balls which the cuirassed train sent over. His elder brother, a lieutenant in the Thuringian Uhlan Regiment, has been sent round by General von Moltke to see how fares it with the lad. I fear the tidings which he will have to take back must be the reverse of good. The number of prisoners altogether taken on the day before yesterday amounts to about 1,000, a large proportion of whom are sailors.

I think I have mentioned that there came into the German lines, in the region of the 12th Army Corps, regular files of the Paris newspapers by a machinery which I can only allude to. I learn that there is great reason to suspect that the papers so transmitted are written and printed expressly for this purpose, and that our "trusted courier" is a double traitor. One of the officers lately sent out from Paris saw there a paper containing a totally different list of prices of provisions from that contained in "our" impression of the same paper of the same date. The dodge is creditable to the cuteness of the Parisians. It seems provisions are really much dearer in Paris than we thought them. Everything still quiet. Probably the troops will soon be sent back to quarters. The threatening symptoms, however, still continue; they are only postponed. As it is, not a single shot has been fired to-day on either side in my hearing. This, of course, covers the statement that the bombardment of Mont Avron has not begun.

Margency, Dec. 23, Evening.—P.S. At two o'clock this afternoon the artillery duel recommenced, and continued till dark. The firing from the forts and field batteries at Drancy and Courneuve was very heavy. Our reply

was from between Aulnay and Sevrans. About 30,000 French infantry stood in line from Courneuve to Bagbigny, in the rear of Clichy. Two attempts were made to assault Le Bourget, but neither made any head. The French are still in position, and receiving continued reinforcements by railway. The renewal of fighting is expected to-morrow. Our bombardment has not yet begun.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE Parisians had so far ceased to believe in the military capacity of their leaders, that the failure of the sortie of December 21 affected them much less than might otherwise have been expected.

The Special Paris Correspondent wrote on Christmas Eve:—

The Parisians are singularly unlucky in their weather, and bad luck pursues bad management. In their first great sortie of the 30th November, the army left all its warm wrappers in Paris; there came on a fierce cold with a biting wind, and the Intendance of the army is so villanous, that it was found impossible to provide the soldiers with their warm clothing, although they were but three miles distant from Paris. After a delay of three weeks, in which the weather was warm but wet, and in which it seemed that the generals were only waiting for the roads to dry and harden a little, that the guns might pass along, another great sortie was attempted on the shortest day, the 21st. It partly succeeded, and partly failed; but instantly another severe frost set in, and the army is again in great difficulties. This time, however, it is not so much because the soldiers are ill-clad that they are hard pressed. They feel the cold bitterly—it is a very trying time, but their coverlets are at hand. Indeed, most of the troops have been made to carry an extra

wrapper in the form of a breastplate. Their knapsacks are thrown aside, and they have a wrapper arranged fourfold hanging from their necks, tied with a belt round their waists and reaching down to their legs. This warm padding has all the advantage of a breastplate in battle, and of a muff when the hands are idle. The worst of the frost, which is four or five degrees below zero on the centigrade scale, is not at present that it chills the men, but that it hardens the ground. The ground is like iron, and this is terrible, seeing that the operations which are now in progress depend as much on the spade and the pickaxe as on cannon and Chassepôts.

In explaining to you what is being done, or about to be done, I must forewarn you that much of what I have to say is mere inference. I have been out to the advanced posts all along the line from Ville Evrart to Groslay. I have seen a good deal, and as far as a mere civilian can judge, have come to certain conclusions, which you will take for what they are worth. The plan of operations is most carefully concealed; the press is silent, and one of the journals, the *Patrie*, is suspended for three days, because last night it ventured to speak of a particular movement as in progress. You will not find any two persons here of one mind as to what General Trochu intends. Most persons tell me that they have not the most remote conception of what he can be after: his famous plan is to them a perfect puzzle. A great many people say that General Trochu has no plan at all, and that he is only attempting to amuse the Parisians and keep up their spirits by a series of fireworks. The General has his faults—he is apt to be undecided, he thinks too long and talks and writes too much; but he is a very able man, and he is too much in earnest to be capable of mere play. Indeed, one of the theories which

I hear broached is this—"Trochu wants to be killed,—that's all;" and you should hear how his staff speak of his intrepidity on needless occasions. I do not think it is right to assume, as so many of his critics do, that General Trochu is a fool, because his scheme is not apparent; or that his army is composed of cowards because it is not successful. Coleridge gave some wise advice when he said, "Count yourself ignorant of a man's understanding until you understand his ignorance." Pardon me, therefore, if I venture to believe that General Trochu is serious, and that his operations are worthy of attentive study. The view of them which I now present to your notice you will not accept as authoritative, but you can easily judge whether or not it is at least plausible.

General Trochu is a man of great tenacity. He is very slow of decision—too slow; but he holds to an idea once formed with extraordinary firmness. It is natural to conclude that, having formed in his own mind a plan for the deblockade of Paris which he could not put into execution until the tenth week of the siege, he would be unwilling to give up what he had taken so long to mature. If he cannot work out his idea in one way, he will try to work it out in another. Now, what was his idea? Many persons will tell you that he expected by gallant and hard fighting to cut his way through the three lines of circumvallation which the Prussians have drawn around Paris. This is the idea which suggests itself to ninety-nine out of a hundred Frenchmen; and a good deal of the language of various generals, especially that of General Ducrot in his famous address to the army, goes to support it. General Trochu may for a moment have harboured the expectation that his plan of operations, commenced on the 29th of November, might, by the concurrence of another French army coming up the valley of the Seine, effect a scission of the Prussian

lines. But without such help from the outside—help which was in any case problematical, and which became more than doubtful in the ignorance of the French generals as to their point of junction—General Trochu is too cautious not to understand perfectly that nothing could be more hazardous than to attempt to cut his way through the Prussian lines with the Army of Paris. There was a chance, perhaps, if the Army of the Loire were as good as reported—a fair chance that the operations he was about to commence might end in such a result. But it was necessary to count on such a result only as a possible surplusage. In reality, General Trochu is too good a critic not to know that the triple line of investment is inexpugnable by direct attack, and he is much too wary to knock his head against a stone wall.

What, then, was his plan, which we may assume to be still his plan? The plan, in so far as it is at all intelligible, is to interfere with the communications of the investing army. The German army, notwithstanding the requisitions which it makes on the surrounding country, draws its chief supplies from Germany by the Strasburg Railway. At Chelles, upon the Marne, there is a great dépôt; and from this point the convoys of provisions bifurcate—the greater number wending their way southwards, and then westward to Versailles and St. Germain; while a large portion wend their way northwards to supply the army north of Paris. If these convoys could be intercepted—if they could be seriously troubled—if they could be forced to make a wide détour, the besieging army would be in a bad way. It would run short of supplies, and at the same time it would not be easy for the forces in one direction to come to the relief of forces in another direction. The idea of General Trochu, then, seems to have been that he would run a wedge out upon

one or other of the lines of communication leading from the railway station at Chelles. Against which of the lines would he run his wedge? He chose the southern line of convoys, both because it is the more important to the army of investment, and because by seizing the ridge which dominates the Marne at Villiers, he might hope to work his way gradually on the heights of Sucyen-Brie, and to Villeneuve St. Georges. In this view he had a right to say that Bourget was of no importance to him. It was enough for him to cut the communications on one side; so he gave all his attention to the heights south of the Marne, which have their key at Villiers. On the 29th of November he went out to seize these heights. His bridges broke, and he could not proceed till the following day, and then, though his army fought well, it failed. It failed from a variety of causes, which it is needless here to recapitulate. The troops were withdrawn, and now, after three weeks given to rest and reorganization, they are called upon for a new effort; but, as far as I can make out, this new effort is only a development of the old idea in a new direction.

The one tangible result of the first great sortie was that the French troops came to occupy the plateau of Avron in advance of the Fort de Rosny. They have fortified it strongly, and mounted it with guns of immense range, that reach even to Chelles. It appears that General Trochu could not give up the idea of operating upon Chelles, and upon the convoys thence proceeding. He had failed to endanger these convoys on their southern line. He has now attempted to drive his wedge into the northern line. Bourget was of no importance to him according to his original idea; it is all-important to him now that he has to push this idea in a new direction. The attack on Bourget on the 21st was no feint—no diversion; it was a real attack, which will be

followed up, and which has a vital connection with the simultaneous attack on Neuilly-sur-Marne, on Ville Evrart, and on the Maison Blanche. You are aware—if you received my last letter—that the attack on the position indicated by these last three names was successful; but I expressed some doubt whether the French troops would be able to hold it, dominated as it is by the heights of Noisy-le-Grand on the south, and by those of Montfermeil on the north—the latter, according to the Ordnance map, having an elevation of 116 mètres. The Maison Blanche is but two miles from Chelles, and it seems important that the French should be driven out of it; but they mean to hold it if they can, and they are making every preparation to hold it to the uttermost. They are making entrenchments and all kinds of barricades and earthworks in their new position; and here comes their difficulty. A fierce frost has set in to hinder all their efforts, and the earth is like a rock. It seems as if the elements were fighting against these Frenchmen. It is bad enough that the army should be starved with cold. There was a sentinel found frozen at his post last night. But here is something still worse for the plans of General Trochu, whatever they may be—that to construct earthworks in such a season requires superhuman strength. So much depends on the weather, that no one can foresee the end of this; but in the meantime the soldiers of General Vinoy are doing their best to make their new position secure within easy range of Chelles. While to General Vinoy was allotted the task of seizing upon Ville Evrart and the Maison Blanche, which he did without difficulty—almost, indeed, without firing a shot—to General Ducrot was allotted that of taking Bourget. He got up to Drancy and to the Groslay Farm; but although he got into Bourget on one side, he was unable

to hold it. Many of the troops have been removed, and most persons imagine that the attempt on Bourget is over. I hear the croakers say, "It is all over, it is all over; you will hear no more of this business, it is all humbug." They are much too confident, these croakers. If a man croaks all round, he is sure to be sometimes right, as the great art of betting is to bet against all events. It may be that the attack on Bourget will have to be given up; but it is not humbug, and we can conclude nothing from the inaction produced by the weather. The troops are withdrawn as much as possible from the cold, and those who are left are engaged in making, slowly, with enormous difficulty, trenches, by which Bourget may be approached from the side of Drancy. Do not suppose, therefore, that because you hear of no fighting, nothing is being done. The only difference is that the troops are fighting with pickaxe and spade, instead of with powder and shot. I fancy you will hear soon of a renewed attack on Bourget; and when General Trochu has an idea, you may be pretty sure that, to use a celebrated phrase, he will peg away at it.

The French deserve to succeed for their perseverance, and for a power of endurance which seemed beyond the reach of Parisian nature; but their stupidities and blunders are innumerable, and sadly interfere with one's sympathies. Few of us expected to see the sublime spectacle of so much calm fortitude and indomitable submission to suffering as Paris presents this Christmas Eve; but, on the other hand, one expected from Frenchmen intelligence—and at least ordinary skill, not to say quickness of invention and infinity of resource. What do we find? A wonderful stupidity of administration—a lack of resource, and a constant falling into the same foolish blunders time after time. They abound in exclamations

of the intelligence of the German army, which they describe under some contemptible name that suggests deceit and trickery; and they themselves have a wonderful blindness, which seems like an epidemic, and suggests what in olden times people would describe as a possession of devils or a visitation of God. The number of times the French have been surprised in this war is beyond belief. It seems as if they were always surprised. On the morning of the 2nd of December, on the heights of Champigny, they were surprised as in the early dawn they were getting ready their soup. And see what happened at Ville Evrart on the night of the 21st. It is a little hamlet. Some of the Prussians, unable to get out of it fast enough in the morning when the French took possession of it, hid themselves in cellars and out-of-the-way places. The French are in the most blessed ignorance of this, and have not the precaution to survey properly the hamlet they have seized. At midnight out come the Prussians, and create a fearful panic, in which they kill a French general, and do considerable damage besides. The Prussians pay for it in the end, but it is painful to think of the stupid confidence of the French, who are not so well supplied with officers that they can afford to lose any. It is doubtful whether a French general who can allow himself to be surprised in this way is of much value; still, people who pretend to know him speak of the death of General Blaise as a serious loss. But the blundering at Ville Evrart was more than matched by the blundering at Bourget. The Marines were sent to take with the bayonet this place, which the generals now find that they have to approach in trenches, with heavy guns. There were thus sacrificed to no purpose 300 Marines, who are undoubtedly the best fighting men in Paris. It is the constant error of the French generals in this war, that they send men to do

the work of cannon-balls. Of the stupidities of the French Intendance I am tired of speaking. On the night of the 21st the soldiers at Bourget were thirty-six hours without bread or wine—all in the bitterest cold. Nothing can be worse than such management.

Paris, Dec. 26.—Worse and worse! The centigrade thermometer is down to twelve degrees below zero, and there seems no prospect of an immediate change. I cannot help thinking of those good old days when, as the year drew to a close, the armies engaged in a campaign always went into winter quarters. When it is said that the race of mankind has degenerated, let us henceforth bear in mind, as a proof to the contrary, that we carry on war now-a-days irrespective of the seasons. Nor is this a trifle. There are seasons so inclement that most men feel they have enemy enough on their hands if they can bear up against the cold which numbs all energy and chills the most ardent courage. There have now been frozen to death at the outposts no less than fifty sentinels; there are more than 1,200 cases of severe frost-bite, many of them likely to prove fatal, in the military hospitals; and the Seine has begun to freeze. How can the fighting go on in such weather? Both sides are too glad to desist, but especially the enemy, whose game it is not to fight, but to wait for famine to do its work. The ground also is so hard, being frozen to the depth of twenty inches from the surface, that it is impossible to proceed with the earthworks, and all the troops have been withdrawn under shelter, except those which are absolutely necessary to guard the advanced positions. We must wait for a rise in the temperature before hostilities can be resumed in more active fashion.

In this vexatious delay how bitterly must Trochu lament that he ever underrated the importance of Bourget; that he allowed the enemy to seize upon it; and that, when he

attacked it on the morning of Wednesday last, he had no idea of the strength of the defences with which the Prussians in their seven weeks' occupation had surrounded it. He battered it with cannon on the north side, and then sent his Marines to take it with the bayonet, little thinking how powerfully it was defended with walls and earthworks, one behind another, which he has now to attack from the south. We are all waiting with anxiety to see the further development of the somewhat complicated series of operations commenced on the 21st. To the general sketch of these operations which I gave in my last two letters I have nothing important to add except this, that the French still hold the Ile de Chiard, and seem determined to hold it. This is a large ait in the Seine, between Chatou and Croissy, and if its occupation be as serious as it would seem, it indicates on the part of General Trochu a considerable confidence in his strength, and a desire to possess himself of the peninsula, which has its apex at Croissy, as he already possesses the peninsula which has its apex at Gennevilliers. That he will attempt to drive forward in all the three directions in which he is at present feeling his way, is not likely. I understand that he has withdrawn the troops from Ville Evrart; but still there are three distinct lines on which he threatens to drive forward—the first by the Maison Blanche to Chelles, the second by Drancy and Bourget to the north-east, the third by the peninsula of Croissy to the north-west; and we shall know ere long whether by one or another of these lines the General can find a weak place in the circumvallation of Paris. He has five good weeks before him, and there is no saying what he may not be able to do in that time, nor what—outside Paris—the provinces may not be able to achieve.

Five weeks—that is, up to the 1st of February. It is, of

course, difficult to be precise in calculating how long famine can be resisted—so much depends on the temper of the people, on the possibilities of the weather, and on the mysterious working of disease, in addition to the simple question of food. Calculations differ, but it may safely be said that those who reckon the surrender of Paris as inevitable at a date earlier than the 1st of February, have all along taken a most desponding view of the Parisian power of resistance, and have ever since the commencement of the siege been predicting a speedy catastrophe. A catastrophe is quite possible, but it has certainly not been speedy hitherto, nor is it likely to be as speedy as the despondent suppose, and as the enemy desires. It is certainly on the cards that, if ill-luck should haunt us in Paris, and if ill-tidings should reach us from without, a surrender may take place before the month of January can expire. But it is also on the cards, and from all that I have been able to glean I think it more probable, that with ordinary luck the resistance will be prolonged even beyond the 1st of February. This is not to say that the suffering of the people will not be excessive. It is excessive even now, and it is a constant wonder to me how they endure. But they have shown, hitherto, such powers of endurance—such a calm, proud, patient spirit, that we are bound to count upon it to the uttermost.

As for the sufferings of the people, consider the death-rate of the last two weeks—2,728, which figure, be it remembered, is independent of slaughter in the field. Typhoid fever is on the increase, and especially among the refugees from the suburbs, who are huddled in rooms together in great want and misery. I found an excuse a few weeks ago to visit some of these people, and managed as follows:—All over Paris you will see the usual yellow tickets hung out, announcing that apartments and floors

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are to be let. They are to be seen in great numbers, especially in the fashionable quarters—in numbers so great as to indicate a very large emigration from Paris, and an imminent fall in house-rent. I went to the *concierges* of several houses, and asked leave to see the apartments which were to be let. It was in the end of October, and the almost invariable answer was, "We have nothing to let till January." I replied, "Very good, that will just suit me; let me see the rooms." In these rooms were crowded together the poor families dispossessed of their homes in the suburbs. They came pouring into Paris, some with a few bits of furniture, others with little besides their clothes. Here a whole family got packed into one room; there a couple of families were heaped together in a stifling atmosphere—odorous of children, onions, garlic, and cat. These poor wretches, living in some of the best quarters of Paris in fearful discomfort, now crowd together more than ever to keep themselves warm, and they breed pestilence.

The cold also produces its victims more directly. Indeed, considering the length of time for which numbers of poor wretches have to stand in file before the provision shops, all in the coldest weather, it is a wonder that the victims are not more numerous. The deaths from bronchitis are this last week 172, those from pneumonia 147. There is plenty of warm clothing to be had, but there is a lack of fuel. Coal there is none, except for the uses of the Government; and the supply of firewood is running so short, that it has been resolved to cut down the trees in the woods of Boulogne and Vincennes, and if need be in all the gardens about Paris, and on the Boulevards. Imagine Paris shorn of its trees. The destruction of trees about the capital, even up to the present time, is fearful to behold; what will it be in the next six weeks! I tremble as I think of the noble

trees in the gardens of the Tuileries, in the Champs Elysées, in the gardens of the Elysée, and of the British Embassy. But what can the Government do? It is better that the trees should burn than that the people should perish for cold. Part of the fatality which has pursued the Parisians was this, that when the siege began, the firewood in store was about half the usual supply. The summer had been very dry; the Marne and the Seine had been unusually low, and the rafts of wood which are transported to Paris by the rivers could not be delivered in time. So it came to pass that Paris has been threatened with starvation from cold as well as with starvation from hunger.

For food, there is little else left but bread and horse. Now and then we make a haul of something rich and rare. We had three enormous salmon the other day in Paris—at least, they were called salmon; but I am not ichthyologist enough to say what they were. The fish were large, as large as the largest salmon, but mottled like trout, and the French name for them is *beccard*. A few days ago, in the same first-rate restaurant in which I saw the supposed salmon, I was offered lamb for dinner. The proprietor declared most solemnly it was innocent lamb. Whereupon, with a trust in human nature which is worthy of the Garden of Eden, I agreed to eat the innocent lamb. What do you think it was? It was the opposite of lamb—it was wolf. We are thus in Paris every day going through a history which is like one of Pilpay's fables reversed. There were three rogues in Pilpay who made a Brahmin believe, by the force of assertion, that his sheep was an unclean dog. And here there are scores of restaurant keepers who make you believe that dog is sheep, and wolf is lamb, and horse is beef, and ass is veal. Whatever it is, the food is not good, and it is scarce. But if those who go

to a first-rate restaurant, and eat it under the most favourable conditions (these, however, being very costly), find themselves badly off, what shall we say of the poor who have little besides bread to feed on, and who are deprived of the condiments by which their small dole of tough horse can be made palatable, or the treasure trove of a fat rat can be made digestible? The different mayoralties of Paris have compared notes, and have prepared lists of those in each district who are necessitous. They amount to very nearly 500,000 inhabitants, that is, a quarter of the population. The lists, however, do not include myriads of tradesmen's families and hard-working members of professions who are ashamed to throw themselves on public charity, and who starve in secret. With all this, there is not a murmur to be heard. The people submit to their hard fare, to cold and hunger, and long dark nights void of amusement, with a cheerfulness which is sublime. There is no deception in this. They complain quick enough about many things. They criticise the Government fearlessly, denouncing its mistakes and blunders. But they make no complaints about their miseries, and accept them with an unpretending fortitude which no people in the world could surpass. No murmurs, and very little crime. The chief crime is drunkenness. It must be confessed that one can now see in the streets of Paris—hitherto the most sober capital in Christendom—the unwonted spectacle of intoxication. The anxieties of the siege, the want of amusement, and the badness of the food, all lead a number of people to seek for support in strong drink. What stuff it is they drink! Wine is not enough for them, and they take to spirits. The spirit which they adore is rum. They buy it at two francs a bottle, and make it into punch. The National Guards especially are] great in punch. One battalion invites

another to what they call "a punch," and when the war-companies of a battalion are ordered out of Paris to the advanced posts, the comrades who remain behind treat them to what they call the "punch of adieu." I am not going to defend drunkenness, either in ordinary mortals or in National Guards. There have been some gross cases of drunkenness in the National Guards, of which one cannot speak too contemptuously; but do not let us make too much of the crime; and, above all, let us make every allowance for the temptation to it. There is not half the drunkenness in Paris that there is in London, and it is marked here because it is so unwonted. If the London populace were in the condition of the Parisian populace—reduced to such straits—let us try to imagine how they would behave, and especially how they would soak themselves in beer and gin.

Christmas-tide was not disturbed by sorties, as the besiegers had apprehended, and outside Paris, at least, the festival was observed in a truly German manner. On Christmas Eve the Special Correspondent at Versailles, dating on that occasion from Villeneuve St. Georges, wrote:—

Birnam wood has come to Dunsinane in the shape of the ornamented trees which the besiegers of Paris have prepared for Christmas time. We have not had a great sortie to the south-eastward to enliven the frost-bound banks of the Seine, though a sortie has seemed very probable from day to day, and this trip, in the biting December weather, has not shown me much that was new. But before returning to head-quarters, I will lead you through a half-ruined village, where high revel is being held among the lads who wait for Trochu's coming. The captain of the company in charge of the village is entertaining his men with a feast of rough

though hearty cheer. There is a tree lighted up with many odds and ends of candle, and there is a small barrel of beer, and there are several cakes made with almond crust. Some presents, too, are laid under the tree—a tobacco pouch and a pipe, a few knives, and other small matters—which seem greatly to please the men who are rewarded with them. I do not think that there are presents for all. But all can gaze on the tree, and all have a pull at the contents of the small barrel. Strong, jovial fellows, in greatcoats, with collars turned up, and with icicles melting from their beards, come crowding into the room—some absent and unknown Frenchman's parlour—and draw themselves up respectfully into the group before the good-natured captain. He speaks to them of his being glad to see them there, and says that the beer, though not out-and-out Bavarian, will smack of home. And the men receive the remark with evident pleasure. They must be thinking much of home to-night, and of all the Christmas gatherings in Germany, which are made less glad than usual by the absence of so many soldiers and so many Landwehr battalions. Remember, as you watch this cheery scene, that we are near the great hungry city. These brave lads are banished from the Fatherland for awhile, and yonder French sentinels who guard the approaches to Paris are having but a dreary Christmas, even if they escape a bullet through the head before the end of the week. We see the jollity round the improvised German tree, and we think of the starving millions who shiver in the city. It is a great time race—a mighty effort between the hostile nations. The French obstinacy in holding to their frontier of 1792 is equalled by the invaders' resolve to have that frontier changed. If we turn back from the village of the Christmas party towards the bridge at Villeneuve St. Georges, we see

waggon trains passing ceaselessly on to supply the troops before Paris. Supplies of men are wanted, too, as well as supplies of food.

Dec. 25, Morning.—I hear from an intelligent young soldier, who has just travelled up to the front, that all the strength of Germany is gathering against France. The struggle is seen to be very serious, in spite of what has passed. A captured Emperor, a captured army, ruin, invasion, and political change, have left the French still able to fight. They “come up to time” after each knock-down with surprising alacrity; and though the chances are in favour of Germany, the German people must not be disappointed at one, or two, or three months of delay. Such a work as the destruction of France requires patience. What if they resist after Paris has fallen? What if Trochu, to begin with, should push his defence to the point of starvation, and not surrender until February is well advanced? The best of the German leaders have seen that no chance must be neglected, and fresh forces are being called up, and the King himself has spoken boldly of the delay which may occur. When the whole of the Landwehr is in readiness, as it soon will be, and the strong places in rear of the army are garrisoned by this formidable militia, there will be such a force for active operations as will tax every effort of M. Gambetta to confront. The new levies in France fight as well as the old and vanquished army, or, at least, they seem to stand their ground with as much effect. But the wear and tear to the country of having such men shot down will become almost insupportable.

It has been my fortune to see many of the recent prisoners, officers of the Gardes Mobiles, and officers come back from honourable retirement to serve the cause in extremity. I have found the same obstinate spirit in most

of them. They own that they are worsted, but stick to the "national idea" with a faith in France that cannot be denied. They will not believe that the frontier is to be changed; and here is the difficulty of the solution—the sore point of the whole matter to Frenchmen. "If we do give it up," they say, "we will try for it again."

It was on the east and north-east sides of the circle of investment, where the fighting had been hardest and most frequent, that the Germans celebrated Christmas with most joviality. From Margency the Correspondent with the Army of the Crown Prince of Saxony wrote on Christmas morning:—

"Where shall we dine?" I know where I should like to dine; but the obstinate Parisians come between one and "the old folks at home," and the young ones as well. I need not complain of want of Christmas invitations; it is in their very number that the bewilderment lies. With the fear of being assailed as a Jenkins before my eyes, of being cynically accused of flunkeyism, I refrain from an allusion to the nature of one invitation. Then there is that kindly one from compatriots in Versailles. Good old Dr. Tegener, of the Ecouen Hospital, has sent round another with a postscript to the note in the shape of the single word "Punch." Some merry lads in Epinay wish me to go down there, and be jovial under the shadow of La Briche; a battery of artillery would be glad of my company—at least they say so—at Napoléon-St.-Leu; a battalion of Würtembergers in Champs half booked me more than a fortnight ago; and the list ends with the genial and cordial invitation of good Major von Schönberg, and his officers of the 2nd Battalion of the 103rd Saxon Regiment. To-night is the battalion's turn for duty on certain far outlying foreposts, the locality of which I need not particularize. The

officers are right hearty fellows. Then there is Frau Majorin's Bavarian beer (per *Feldpost*). Yes, I say done and done again with the major. It is a long ride, with the temperature, too, below freezing point, and things over on the French side are not altogether tranquil; but the way I am going will bring me to the right spot, if that sluggish firing from the forts should warm up and cover a sortie, and there is something in all likelihood to be got by a gossip at the officers' casino in Gonesse.

Gonesse, Dec. 25, Afternoon.—In stating, in the hurried notes which I sent you on the afternoon of the 21st, that Le Bourget was actually taken by the French, I was quite right—proceeding on the evidence of my own senses, although at a later hour periphrastic phrases were resorted to, calculated to convey the idea that it was only a partial and temporary occupation. On the contrary, the recapture on the same night was only partial, the French holding part of Le Bourget during the night, although they withdrew without fighting in the morning. In the first rush of the French on Le Bourget, on the 21st, when they came on with daring and rapidity, about sixty men and, I have heard, one officer of the Queen Elizabeths Regiment were taken prisoners. Among the number was an ambulance assistant, whom the French sent back the next day, in terms of the Geneva Convention, and he has just given me some interesting details of what he saw during his brief captivity. The prisoners were taken into St. Denis, and temporarily placed in a house with sentries over them. They were treated with the greatest humanity, amply supplied with coffee, sugar, wine, and bread. There was also given them abundance of flesh, but it was candidly owned that the meat was horseflesh. The French officers came among the Prussian prisoners, and asked

them with great solicitude whether they had any cigars.

An exchange was effected, the Germans giving cigars for cognac, of which there seemed to be great plenty. A party of St. Denis ladies, dressed with the utmost elegance, came also to see the prisoners, and bound also, besides the gratification of their curiosity, on an acquisitive errand. "Had Messieurs les Prussiens any bacon in their knapsacks?" If so, the ladies would be glad to buy it of them. Only two fellows had any, and they gallantly made a present of it to the fair inquirers, who became very complimentary then as to the personal appearance of the captives. "What great, huge, fine men these Prussians are, to be sure," remarked one lady. "Yes, and just compare them with our little morsels of fellows," added another, pointing to the five feet nothing sentry who was on duty over the stalwart guardsmen. Not unnaturally, as I think, the "little morsel" in question felt aggrieved at this observation, and his irritation took the form of turning the ladies out. My informant saw nothing of any privations during his sojourn in St. Denis; but then he was there only for a few hours, and owns his opportunities were not great.

What fearful damage one of those huge shells from the fort guns is capable of doing when it falls and explodes in a close mass of men was illustrated yesterday by a terrible catastrophe. A single shell, which burst behind one of the parallels at Pont Iblon, killed and wounded fourteen men of the 1st Guard Regiment. I have not been able to learn the proportion which the killed and wounded bear to each other; but fourteen fighting men have undoubtedly been rendered *hors de combat* by the explosion of a single shell.

In the officers' casino there is sitting a dragoon officer who has come hither on an errand worth mentioning in England. His men, quartered in a village a consider-

able distance to the rear, have heard that there is in Gonesse a colporteur of the English Bible Society with his waggon, and they have asked the officer to come and ask the colporteur either to visit or to part with a few parcels of his tracts. I forgot to mention at the time, that on the road between Gonesse and Aulnay, on the morning of the 23rd—a road which two hours after was a very *via dolorosa* of exploding shells—I met this same colporteur coolly jogging forward with intent to distribute his wares among the battalions standing on the slope there waiting for the battle to commence. “It was a good time,” according to the expressed views of this simple, brave, Christian man, “for the men to read good words when they were standing there with nothing to do, and with the shadow of death hanging over them.” There are few who will disagree with him, but there are not many who would proceed so practically to give effect to his convictions. I regret much that I have lost the card on which I wrote the name of this brave colporteur, but he came from Carlsruhe, he told me.

Here is a story of valour of another kind, but not of a higher character. In the 1st Battalion of the Queen Elizabeths there is a boy-lieutenant, with a swarthy face, and bright black eyes, whose name is Von Schramm. He cannot be more than seventeen—were he an English lad, he would be at Eton. A German lad, he has done with the schools, passed his examinations, got his commission, won the iron cross, and is the Adjutant of his battalion. When Major von Altrock (Le Bourget, if it has made bullet-holes in his mantle, has brought him, too, a step in rank)—when Major von Altrock led his battalion into Le Bourget, on the 20th, little Von Schramm was left behind sick in Aulnay. The guns of the 21st knocked the sickness out of him; his regiment was fighting, and he not there. He jumped on his

horse, crossed the inundation at Le Blanc Mesnil, and rode into Le Bourget athwart the artillery fire from Drancy. The Queen Elizabeths, however, were already all but driven out, and he, striking the village street half way up, found himself in the crowd of the Frenchmen. To leap from his horse and dash into a house was the work of an instant—if he could get out at the back door he might yet escape. But there was no back door—the pursuers were hot on his heels, and Von Schramm was a prisoner. His captors asked him for his parole, but he refused to give it, and they proceeded to conduct him towards St. Denis—a convoy of two officers and two men. In going through the park of Le Bourget—a beautiful spot, in which there is a lake and many *bosquets*—the musketry fire from the retreating guardsmen came very close and fast. The officer who carried Von Schramm's sword was shot, and fell. Von Schramm made a dash at his own sword, got his hand inside the hilt, cut down the other officer, took to the water like a duck, dodged the bullets of the soldiers as he swam across, and finally joined his regiment after all—rather damp it is true, as a man will be who takes to swimming with his clothes on, but extremely jolly. And the best of it was that the ducking cured his sickness; he is as well as ever he was. At least one is entitled, I think, to say so after having seen him demolish a massive dinner and two bottles of beer.

Clichy, December 26.—It is a long weary stretch from Gonesse to Aulnay. There is no intervening village, and not a single house by the wayside. There used to be two straw stacks, but they have been burnt down by French shells. I have seen during this campaign not a little of the visible effect of close shell-fire, but I never have seen anything to equal the frequency of the vestiges left on this track by the almost continuous

bombardment of the last three days. In one small plot behind a battery *emplacement* I counted twenty-one shell-holes, yet the solid earthworks were wonderfully little dilapidated. If they had been of stone, they must simply have been knocked to pieces; and nobody who has seen shells exploding among stone works requires to be told how the splinters of iron become multiplied over and over again by the splinters of stone. It was a curious proof of that masterly consciousness of ability to concentrate, and absence of fussy demonstration on the part of the Germans, that not a single soldier nor a single gun was visible on this expanse on which the day before there stood an army. The men were in the villages on the alert, it is true, and ready for action at a moment's notice, but they were not needlessly brought from under cover.

I arrive at the château, and put up my horse there, going out in advance to the foreposts before the day fades. As I reach the garden opening into the forest, a discouraging sight meets the eye. Four soldiers are carrying on their shoulders a motionless form, lying on a stretcher, and covered with a bloody blanket. "Wounded?" The solemn "Dead" comes from the mouth of the accompanying under-officer. It is a corpse they are carrying up into the village. This was Private Jeskow's last Christmas morning. He was making his coffee in a house behind Outpost No. 8, when a shell burst under the window. His sergeant told him he was in dangerous quarters, but the coffee was near the boil. Before it boiled, another shell had come and burst in the room; a fragment struck Jeskow in the back, and killed him.

Forward down a slope through a solitary wood of dense underwood mingled with goodly trees. On the pathway are numerous craters of shells. There is a little rise,

and then I emerge on to a belt of heathy clearing in the wood. Everywhere the wood has been full of barricades, of *chevaux de frise* of all kinds of appliances for arresting an enemy. On this cleared belt are works of greater pretensions—parallels, entrenchments, strong stockades, trenches, enfiladed approaches, and what not. A few soldiers are visible about it. There are more among the huts to the right. What a glorious sky is that which lies over the faint gossamer-like smoke of Paris! The sun is going down, not in human blood this Christmas afternoon, but in bloodlike hues of his own creation. All the firmament is rippled in crimson wavelets, and the light comes ruddy on the earth as if it fell through stained glass windows. Five minutes brings one across the clearing into more scrub, and then into a village of châteaux nestling in the scrub. Forest, clearance, and village all remind me very much of the neighbourhood of Chislehurst in Kent. There is the same ruggedness, and still the same appearance of vicinity to the metropolis in the physical aspect of the scene. On the cross-roads in the centre of this collection of villages I meet the officers in command of the two battalions waiting to be relieved. The men are massed behind the walls. They are sauntering up and down on the exposed road. Any news? None. Perhaps a little. At ten o'clock this morning two French brigades deployed in parade order before Bondy in two long lines. Then it seemed as if the troops marched past a general and formed hollow square, in which they stood for nearly an hour, after which one brigade went back to quarters, while the other marched on to the foreposts. It was conjectured that a religious service was being performed while the troops stood there in hollow square. If so du Nord and de l'Est furnished the responses, for they were firing at that hour. About

the same hour three brigades were visible marching in the front of Aubervilliers, and the Observatory officer reported that he had seen two naval batteries arrive by train at Bondy, and immediately push forward, as if to take up position. This would seem to argue that there are to be heavy batteries so near us as Bondy, which must, in the event of their not being silenced, have the inevitable result of widening the circle of our forepost environment.

Tramp, tramp, tramp, here comes the 103rd. There is the major in front talking earnestly with the field-officer he is going to relieve. Here comes Hammerstein, unrecognizable by reason of wraps, and only to be discerned and greeted by his voice. He has got on a pair of fur boots, that seem a legacy from an Esquimaux, and here is his big brother-in-law, Kirchbach, and Von Zanthier, and the whole lot of them. Now comes the relieving of the foreposts—a ticklish duty, for the relief must be in full possession before the relieved dare to come out. As each company goes on to its post, it is met by a trusty non-commissioned officer of the departing outpost, who acts as its cicerone. Then the sergeant and the lieutenant go out and change the sentries, and, with a cheery “Good night,” off stumps the “old guard.” Glad enough to go, beyond doubt. The duty here just now is one night on, one night off; but when, as has occurred for the last three days, the day and night “off” are spent standing on the alert, there is not much relaxation. Two battalions, instead of one, are now detailed for the outposts, owing to circumstances to which I am not at present at liberty to allude; and this makes the duty all the harder.

The relieving duty over, we reach our home for the night out beyond the villas. Let me describe it. It is a long, low wooden hut, such as you may see squatters and

gipsies occupying on the debatable ground between Peckham, Lewisham, and Nunhead Cemetery. Its loftiest part is about six feet high, the roof sloping till, at the back, the height is about four feet. The erection is wholly of wood—chiefly, as it appears, of chateau doors. There is one window in the place; it is sashed, and tastefully curtained. There is a wooden floor. One—the lower roofed-side of the room—is lined with spring mattresses, that have evidently also come out of the chateaux. On the walls are pictures—ay, and mirrors—to be ascribed to the same origin; and between the window and the beds is a range of good massive mahogany tables, that were not made by the pioneers. The chairs are a study. They are here of all styles. The fauteuil, the ottoman, the American rocking-chair, the high straight-backed Elizabethan, the Louis-Quatorze settee, and the humble wicker-bottom. There is a pleasant fire burning in the little stove, and you cannot well imagine how cheerful, with the bright lamp burning and the sparkle of the fire, the little nest looked—if you could only forget that the French were not 1,000 yards off, and that you were in so ludicrously easy range of their guns.

But we did forget these facts somehow. The quarters were those of a *Hauptmann*, he in whose charge was the uttermost forepost. But by common consent the officers from the other positions farther back—the *repli*, where the major has his post—and the captains from the right and left rear came dropping in to eat their Christmas dinner with the English guest and comrade. The kitchen was a part of the hut partitioned off, and we had the battalion cook there—a resplendent being in a white cap and apron. Before dinner he entered in state and lit the candles on the Christmas-tree, a goodly sprout, from every bough of which dangled cakes and comfits.

The cloth—we had a cloth, never mind about its colour—was laid, the plates and wine were warmed, and we drew around the social board. I am in a position to present you with the Christmas *menu* of the 2nd Battalion of the 103rd Regiment on the foreposts:—Soup—Liebig's extract. Fish—Sardines, caviare. Entrées—Goose sausage, ham sausage, a variety of undistinguishable sausage. *Pièces de résistance*—Boiled beef and maccaroni, roast mutton and potato salad. Divertissement—*Schinken*, compote of pears, ditto of apples, preserved sour-kront. Cheese, fresh butter, fruit, nuts, biscuits, tarts, &c. The potables were as follows:—One barrel of Frau Majorin's beer still to the good, the other a "dead marine;" very good red wine. Champagne iced—a little too much in fact. The caterer had stuck the bottles outside on his first arrival, and it seemed as if the wine had frozen in a solid mass. When it came to be poured out, it would not run. A proposition was made that the bottles should be broken, a hatchet fetched, and a portion of Champagne ice be served out to each person; but an officer of an inquiring turn of mind, who had been pricking the ice on the surface of one bottle with a skewer, found that it was only about half an inch thick, and that below there lay a limpid pint of liquid champagne. We pricked all the bottles with the skewer, and got on beautifully.

After dinner there were two toasts. One was "The King of Saxony;" the other, "Frau Majorin von Schönberg." Both were drunk with enthusiasm; the latter—in her beer—with positive effusion. Then we got to song-singing. A young officer came to the front in this line—the young Baron von Zehman. Instrumental accompaniments were forbidden on account of the proximity of the enemy, but the choruses were loud enough to

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raise the dead, let alone the Frenchmen. Among the songs were:—

“Stehe ich in finsterner Mitternacht,
(Standing in the dark midnight,)
Wer will unter die Soldaten ?”
(Who 'll be a soldier ?)

The beautiful and plaintive—

“Ich hatte einen Kamaraden,
Einen besseren findest du nicht.”
(I had a comrade,
A better one ne'er you 'd find.)

I seem to have a hazy notion that somebody tried “Bonnie Dundee,” and failed ignominiously.

About ten o'clock a deserter was brought in—a decidedly unfavourable specimen of the French Line. He was dirty, and he had no buttons anywhere—rather a common want I have noticed with French soldiers. He said he was hungry and thirsty. The major gave him something to eat and the run of a bottle of brandy, while we listened to the rascal's lies. When he had finished his rigmarole, which consisted of all sorts of canards, it was too late discovered that he was as drunk as David's sow. He insisted on singing the “Marseillaise,” and when that was done, roared *Abas les Prussiens!* What was to be done with the wretch? If he were turned out of doors he would go to sleep in the ditch, and freeze so hard before morning that you could chip pieces off him. Ultimately he was relegated to the stable by the *repli*, where stood the battalion horses, and was borne away, shoulder high, roaring *Vive la République!*

Enter Under-officer Schultz, wooden as ever—a little woodener, perhaps, on account of the hard frost. Under-officer Schultz came to read the orders. Ordinarily he would have read them dry and gone away dry; but this

was Christmas-time, and kindness prompted the wetting of Under-officer Schultz's throat. "Champagne, red wine, or cognac; Schultz?"—"Cognac, Herr Hauptmann," comes woodenly from the lips of Schultz. Schultz bolted a big glass of cognac, and then read the orders. I think the cognac gave him unction to roll out sonorously the sentences of King William's address to his troops, which was on order for last night. Then he went about with a wooden click of his heels, and disappeared.

There was a continual circulation of officers as we sat by the board in the wooden house. The major and myself were the only sedentaries. Duty called, and the men obeyed it. About midnight Von Zanthier rose and buckled on his sword. He was going round with the patrol; would I go with him? Certainly. There were the officer, three men, and myself. Out we went into the brushwood beyond any of our posts. There were the French outposts, not 500 yards off. We could see the fires lit by the sentries. Could a neutral go across and have a chat with them? Well, not exactly; there were two or three obstacles. Here is a noise in the brushwood; somebody is coming down the path; there are three men. A voice says, "*Venez, messieurs!*" It is a French patrol, and the officer thinks our patrol is French too. Von Zanthier and his men accept the invitation. I stand fast. Presently he comes back with three prisoners—a Mobile officer and two men. The officer is a thorough gentleman. On our way back to the Feldwacht he has an immense deal to say, *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*. When we get back we find that that wonderful man in the white cap has made egg-flip for us. The Mobile officer joins us heartily in a caulker, and does not need to be pressed to take a little supper. He is a jewel of a man. He tells me he once had a moor

in Scotland. He laughs at the notion of Paris capitulating. The Mobiles alone are capable of averting that fate. They certainly are not very brilliant specimens, the two he has met with ; but then, as he says, "they were selected promiscuously." More egg-flip, and then the spring mattresses.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHILE the Germans before Paris were enjoying their *Liebesgaben* with wine and song, their comrades of the 8th Army Corps were very differently occupied. General Faidherbe had advanced upon Amiens and challenged General Manteuffel from a strong position which he had taken up on the Hallu, with its centre at Pont-Noyelles. French accounts state that Faidherbe had with him four divisions, numbering together 35,000 men; German accounts give Von Göben, who commanded the Germans, 30,000; but all the German writers make out Faidherbe's numerical strength to have been twice that of their own army. The battle was fought on the 23rd of December, in the severest weather of an extremely hard winter. The French, by the admission of their adversaries, fought well, and, although the Germans took seven villages in their front, Faidherbe held his position when night fell. The Correspondent with Von Göben wrote from Querrieux, on the evening of December 23:—

After the first battle of Amiens, which took place on the 25th, 26th, and 27th of November, and which resulted in the destruction of what was then called the "Army of the North," the remnants of the latter were said to have fled in the direction of Caen. General Manteuffel resolved at once to pursue them, and consequently marched

on Rouen, which was taken without any resistance, and to Pont-Audemer, having a small but interesting engagement near Forges, where about 300 prisoners were captured. Learning, however, that the bulk of the dispersed army had gone towards Arras and Lille, the commander-in-chief altered his course, turning back to Rouen, where he received intelligence that a new Army of the North had been formed, well equipped, in possession of excellent naval guns, and well served by experienced mariners. This army was said to have taken up a position to the north of Amiens, expecting the approach of the Prussians. In order to meet the enemy we left Château Blangy-Trouville this morning as early as five o'clock. It was extremely cold, and the wind blew fiercely. When day broke 30,000 men, with a powerful artillery, were advancing from all quarters to a huge plain near the village from which I am writing this letter. The place is bordered by a narrow but long line of wood, which is separated by a small river from a hill extending from Querrieux to Busy, about three miles in length. Along this hill the French army was posted, with its batteries, consisting of over seventy heavy guns, ready for action. On the Prussian side the 15th Division, under command of General von Kummer, was ordered to advance and give battle, whilst the 16th Division was to move on the enemy's right wing, and so encircle him as to leave him no other choice than a retreat on the River Somme, which would have been fatal. The 15th and 16th Divisions, it must be remembered, form the 1st Army Corps, commanded by General von Göben, whom the Germans regard as the Moltke of the future.

On the plain mentioned above, orders were given with as much minuteness and regularity as at a mere drill on the Mülheimer Heide, near Cologne. When all was

arranged the army began to move, and after about an hour's marching the advanced guard was near enough to the enemy to exchange the first shots. But soon afterwards our artillery opened their fire, which was responded to by the French in the most regular and constant manner. They aimed wonderfully well, and not only did they damage materially the Prussian artillery, but even silenced one of our batteries.

Whilst cannonading was going on on our right wing, the infantry had taken the villages of Querrieux and Pont-Noyelles by storm. It was a most arduous struggle, and the Prussian and French dead and wounded covered the ground. Thus far all went well for the Prussians during the whole day, until darkness set in, and we were expecting the French to retire. But all at once a fire was reopened against us from the hill, compared with which the fire at Gravelotte was mere child's play. Darkness had begun to set in, and the spectacle was indecribably grand. To this fire we responded but feebly, for our men had expended their ammunition. The French, noticing this, came down the hill, and made a successful attack on Querrieux. The 33rd Regiment began to retreat, the French shells constantly bursting amidst them, when the Fusilier Battalion of the 65th Regiment, under the command of Major von Bastineller, came and checked the further advance of the French. Twice the latter attempted to retake the village, and twice they were repulsed by the same battalion. It was a hand-to-hand fight. Not a shot was fired. Nothing was used but the bayonet or the sword. After the second repulse, the 65th Regiment, commanded by Colonel Baron von Dörnberg, remained ultimately in possession of the village, which was burning in three or four different places, the flames throwing their light far and wide over the surrounding country, and showing

nothing but troops, and hundreds of vehicles of all kinds, which were sent from Amiens in order to convey the wounded to the hospital established in the spacious rooms of the Museum. Thither I hastened late in the day. The highway from Querrieux to Amiers, about twelve English miles, was literally covered with waggons, carriages, carts, and all kinds of vehicles crowded with poor fellows whose limbs had been crippled or mutilated. And when I arrived at the hospital, which is capable of accommodating several hundred patients, it was already overcrowded to such a degree that large numbers of unhappy fellows had to remain in the passages while the surgeons were busy applying the first bandages, and affording relief to the burning wounds. It was a terrible scene of misery and suffering.

The result of this day's fighting seems to be a gain to neither party, except that we hold possession of the villages occupied yesterday by the enemy, and that a large number of prisoners are in our hands.

The battle will be continued to-morrow, and were it to end in a French victory, its result, as bearing upon the ultimate issue of the present war, would be of no material importance. The officers with whom I have spoken on the subject, when they were brought in as prisoners, are all aware of this. However it may end, in justice to the recently formed French army it must be said, that the soldiers of the Republic fight infinitely better than those of the Empire.

On the 24th Von Göben awaited the arrival of reinforcements which General Manteuffel had ordered, and General von Senden was advancing from St. Quentin, in the direction of Corbie, with a division, and Prince Albrecht from Paris, with the cavalry of the Guard. As the French were so

superior in numbers, and were strong in artillery, it had been supposed that General Faidherbe would attack; but the two armies stood gazing at one another for a whole day, and on Christmas Day the French retired in the direction of Arras. It appeared afterwards that their commander could not depend on his commissariat, the experience of six months of warfare not having sufficed to teach the military administration of France the importance of a service to the inefficiency of which they owed some of the earliest defeats of the campaign. Perhaps there were also other reasons why General Faidherbe never in his brief career followed up an advantage, but conducted his campaign on the principle of "limited liability."

The Correspondent with Von Göben wrote on the 24th:—

Pont-Noyelles, Dec. 24.—General von Manteuffel did not return to-night to Amiens, but remained with his staff at Querrieux; and in a light in which you could just distinguish a soldier from a tree, cannonading was heard again on the right wing of the French army. To-day the 16th Division, under the command of General von Barnekow, was in front, whilst the 15th Division formed the reserve, having the same position as yesterday; the left wing at Querrieux extending along the wood in front of the enemy down to Busy and Daours.

The roaring of the cannon was intermingled with the discharge of rifles, but all the shooting came from the French, and nothing or very little was heard from the 16th Division. The explanation was given about four o'clock in the afternoon. The French having early enough seen our movements, were at once impressed with the danger of their position, and with their utter peril if the Germans should succeed in completing their tactics. It would have been nothing but a repetition

of the manoeuvre at Sedan. They peopled, therefore, the top of the hill with soldiers, and feigned an intention to continue the battle. For that purpose they discharged cannons and rifles, galloped to and fro along the line, and showed themselves exceedingly busy. But in the rear, behind the hill, a different movement was going on, consisting in conveying men, horses, and cannons to the railway train. This completed, the dummies on the top of the hill suddenly disappeared. When the 16th Division had completed their arrangements they found the cage empty—the bird had flown. The French had retreated to Arras and Lille. What a terrible sight was the battle-field! Hundreds of the French killed were left on the spot; here knapsacks, there ammunition, rifles, tents, uniforms—a horrible medley. It was then only we could see how hard the struggle must have been yesterday about the villages of Pont-Noyelles and Querrieux.

Wherever there was a stone, a tree, or anything affording protection, there were signs of fighting—a helmet, a kepi, a broken rifle. The cemetery was full of corpses, the sheds and hovels turned into cemeteries. Poor fellows! I do not know whether in consequence of the agonies they suffered; or from some other cause, but it is a fact that nearly all of them had their hands raised above their heads, as if praying to the Almighty—perhaps to shorten their sufferings. The Christmas of 1870 will indeed be a day of sorrow and tears in hundreds and thousands of hitherto happy families.

Albert, Dec. 25.—From the date of this note you will perceive that we are pursuing the enemy in the direction of Arras and Lille. It seems intended this time not to let him loose until he surrenders or is dispersed. Though the task of the First Army is fulfilled in keeping him off Paris, General von Manteuffel is, apparently,

not satisfied with that alone. The German soldiers are in excellent spirits, in spite of the great cold which prevails this year in the north of France. Our provisions seem inexhaustible, and, above all, the state of the men's health is really excellent. The inhabitants behave well, and wherever we are expected food is prepared in advance, so that a few minutes after their arrival our men are at the table busy with knife and fork. Give him enough to eat and drink, and the German soldier, as a rule, is a good-hearted fellow.

Rocquigny (near Arras), Dec. 27.—The results of the battle on the 23rd and 24th instant, of which I sent you an account, become clearer than they were when I wrote first. An account by General Faidherbe, the commander of the Army of the North, is published in *Le Pas de Calais*. It is as follows :—

“Yesterday we were engaged in a battle before Corbie, the line extending over six kilomètres, the right wing being at Contay, the centre at Pont-Noyelles and Querrieux on the small river l'Hallu, the left wing at Daours. The battle lasted from eleven in the morning until six o'clock in the evening, the chances of success having no decided character, when one of our batteries became dismounted and a battalion of our Mobiles began to retreat. Under such circumstances, it was due to the efforts of our Marines that our line of defence has been maintained. The *élan* was admirable. After a charge with the bayonet one company, comprising 150 Marines, threw themselves on Pont-Noyelles, in order to take the village from the Prussians ; forced, however, by a terrible fusillade of the latter, they retired with a loss of thirteen men. The Prussians did not gain any ground, and our men have slept on our original positions in spite of the cold weather during the night. On our left wing Daours has been occupied by the enemy. The French

have demolished two bridges—the one over the Somme, and the other a railway bridge. The general staff has been transferred this morning to the head-quarters at La Haussoye, which is in the centre of the action. At eleven in the morning our troops stood 'en ligne.' Our losses of yesterday have been estimated at about 250 killed and 800 wounded; those of the Prussians must have been considerably larger."

Thus far the account of General Faidherbe I consider as close to the truth as possible; but it was written before the General had noticed the movement of our 16th Brigade, in consequence of which he had considered the retreat the wiser plan to be adopted. Thus the victory must be ascribed to the Prussians.

Von Göben followed Faidherbe with only one of his divisions—the 15th, with which he had fought at Pont-Noyelles—and with the younger Prince Albrecht's flying column, of about the strength of a brigade, to Bapaume, sending the 16th Division to invest Péronne, and keep the communications—a disposition of his forces which could only be justified by the event, and which could not fail to tempt the French commander to attack him before he could concentrate his forces. Faidherbe, who, after the battle of Pont-Noyelles, had retired to the triangle protected by Lille, Arras, and Cambray, when Von Göben proceeded to Bapaume, advanced cautiously, on the 30th, from Vitry, direct upon his position. On the 2nd his advanced guard attacked the Prussian post before Bapaume, but, owing to the failure of a subordinate general, without serious effect. On the 3rd a well-planned attack was made upon the villages before Bapaume, which the Germans, after hard fighting, were compelled to yield, but Faidherbe paused before the town itself. His own account of the matter was, that he had again run short of pro-

visions and ammunition, and this, although he was only a few miles in front of a fortress. Göben held Bapaume, and Faidherbe retired, each claiming the victory, and each greatly exaggerating whatever advantage belonged to him. Péronne capitulated, Faidherbe not having ventured to advance to its relief. The Correspondent with Von Göben wrote, on the 4th of January, from Bapaume:—

General Faidherbe is not only a very brave but likewise a very industrious soldier; and whatever may ultimately be the fate of his army, no one will ever deny that he has given more trouble to the Prussians during the last few days than any Imperial general ever did. After the attack of the 15th Division on the North Army, on the 23rd and 24th of December, I did not expect to have so soon to record a battle; yet a severe one took place yesterday in the neighbouring villages, and in the suburbs of this little town. The French were the aggressors, and the speed with which a battle was delivered, after the heavy losses in the battle near Amiens, may be the consequence of a request of General Trochu.

General Faidherbe was resolved to rescue Péronne, which is now undergoing a very heavy bombardment. Attacking part of the 16th Division in the north of Bapaume, he inflicted heavy losses on the 28th and 68th Regiments of Infantry. A battle, however, being expected yesterday morning, the 15th Division had likewise been ordered to take up position near Bapaume, together with Prince Albrecht's detachment, making up the total number of our army to about 16,000 men. The 85th Infantry Regiment having been ordered to hold the town, which commands the high road from Arras to Péronne, the rest of the army moved, at about six o'clock in the morning, towards Sapignies and Favreuil, where

the enemy's army had its right wing. After an hour's marching the fire was first opened by our 33rd Regiment, promptly replied to by French infantry as well as by artillery. It is as well to mention here at once, that the French attempts to bring heavy pieces on the battlefield have proved a perfect success, and if you peruse the records of losses after each battle, you will find the contingent of the Prussian artillery very great. Thus, one of our batteries lost yesterday two officers, twenty-five men, and thirty-six horses.

The French Army of the North, being in possession of excellent cannon, must likewise be acknowledged to know how to make the best use of them. From commanders in the artillery, who have been in nearly all the battles from the commencement of the present war, I have heard encomiums lavished on the artillery of the Republic, as being so superior to that of the Empire that comparison would be an offence to the former. The same may be said of the Republican soldiers, but they share with the soldiers of the Empire the misfortune of being without skilled leaders. Nevertheless, I must repeat what I said on a previous occasion, that considering the bulk of the Army of the North as recruits, the sailors only excepted, they have behaved well, executing several charges with the bayonet against old well-trained Prussian warriors. This they did with a courage and gallantry which does them great credit. Poor fellows! During one of those charges one battalion had to pass battalions of Prussians hidden at about five yards' distance. A full charge was given from the needle-guns with a result so terrible, that it will remain impressed on my mind during the rest of my life. I doubt whether fifty men of that battalion remained alive or unwounded. What a minute before was a body of French soldiers, burning with patriotism,

was now a heap of misery and woe. Never have I witnessed such carnage as was the case here, and it cannot be wondered at that the few who remained unhurt took to flight as quickly as they could. In other instances the French were not less merciless to our regiments. Thus, when storming a village held by our 33rd Regiment, the French not only carried the village at the point of the bayonet, but killed about 100 of one single battalion, which at the same time had lost all its officers. I saw a colonel, commander of a cavalry regiment, stumble with his horse and break his left thigh-bone. Some of his soldiers came to assist him, and while requesting them not to carry him away but to allow him to look on at the combat, he was shot in the left arm. "Now, boys," he said, "it is getting hot here; take me away." He was taken, and scarcely carried away fifty yards, when he got another shot in the chest, and was killed instantaneously. I saw another case of bravery of a sergeant belonging to the 28th Regiment. When wounded by two bullets, on his left arm and in the back, he came running to Dr. Beigel, of London, who was on duty, and operating in the hospital, asking him whether it would be dangerous to life if he returned to his regiment to continue taking part in the combat. Scarcely had the doctor replied in the negative than the sergeant took to his heels and returned in full speed to fight the French. The battle continued during the whole day, the French line extending from Sapignies, which they had taken, down to Ligny, Tilloy, and Harlen-court, in the south of Bapaume. When the sun began to sink they had their posts in some of the streets of Bapaume itself, about thirty yards distant from the Prussian outposts, exchanging shots with them. The 65th Regiment now began to prepare for a fight in the streets, to build barricades at every entrance of

the town, and to turn every window into a loophole.

The aspect of the town was terrible indeed, the inhabitants, full of fear, fled into the cellars, and even the soldiers looked earnest and gloomy, for the French army was twice, if not three times, as numerous as that of the Prussians, numbering 45,000 men, with forty heavy guns of the marine. During several hours, General von Kummer was seen between the line of the advancing posts, exposing himself to the French fire, and one of his adjutants was wounded. Fortunately the battle did not extend into Bapaume, and at about midnight orderlies arrived with the intelligence that the enemy had left that part of the town which he had taken, and was retreating on the whole line. This, I suppose, was for two reasons; first, because the first battalion of the 65th Regiment had carried before dark, at the point of the bayonet, the villages of Ligny, Tilloy, and Harlencourt—an advance which counteracted all the French had gained during the day; and secondly, the French learned that their losses had been far more numerous than they had imagined. The ambulance of Bapaume having been overcrowded, in the course of a few hours an hospital was established within the spacious rooms of the old barracks, where in the evening I saw about 600 wounded soldiers, fifty of the number French. The total amount of the losses on both sides is not yet known. I estimate it at 3,000 at least.

To-day we hear that the enemy, pursued by two regiments of cavalry, had gone as far back as Groiselle.

That General Faidherbe should have done no more with his Army of the North, whose advance was so eagerly looked for in Paris, is less surprising than that he should have been able to bring it into a state of so much efficiency. He seems to have resisted a pressure like

that to which General Chanzy yielded, and when he went to battle left his worst regiments behind. It must have been one of these latter which an occasional Correspondent saw at Boulogne, on the 26th of December, and which is described in the following letter :—

Perhaps your readers, and especially those familiar with Boulogne, will be interested in learning what has been going on there recently. On arriving a few days ago, instead of the familiar faces of the custom-house officers, who generally crowd round when the English steamer lands her passengers, I saw nothing but armed men. I say armed by courtesy, as I will by-and-by explain. These men were the *Mobilisés de la Somme*, the majority having retreated from Abbeville, as I subsequently learnt from one of them, who seemed delighted to have done so, for he added, "It was time to go, for the Prussians had entered at the other gate." And well they might retreat, for, with their piston-guns, without much ammunition, scarcely drilled and badly officered, they could not have done much for the cause of their country. It was late in the afternoon, and as their drill had just terminated, I postponed further scrutiny of the men until next morning.

In the evening I went to the Café Véyez, where one is always certain to find nine-tenths of the officers quartered in Boulogne; and plenty of the *Mobilisés* were there, sure enough. They seemed as raw as their soldiers, and were expressing to one another their childish admiration of their uniforms. Some had revolvers, which they took much pleasure in showing to everybody, until an impatient customer (no doubt an American) told them, loud enough for all the café to hear him, that "in his country every child above nine years of age knew the use of those toys." This had quite a depressing effect on the officers. Entering into conversation with them, I tried to ascertain

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their opinion about the present state of things. They had a vague notion that matters were getting better for France. They had been obliged to retreat because they had no breech-loading arms, but "they would have some soon, and then——" The Government of the National Defence they neither liked nor disliked. It was the same with regard to England. "The English ought to have lent us a hand," they said; "we fought the Crimean war for them." This was new to me who had just read Kinglake.

Next morning, at half-past six, bugles sounded, and four companies assembled at the Douane to receive tenpence-halfpenny (two days pay) and a loaf (two days rations). This took three hours and a half. Most of the men had been lodging in houses in the town, but a great many had been lying on some straw in the entrepôt, and looked dirty and cold. At last the "distribution" was over, and they went up the Grande Rue to the foot of the ramparts, where they were to be drilled. The scene was simply ludicrous. The officers, with one or two exceptions, kept aloof, talking with their friends; one or two with some sergeants and corporals read out of a little blue manual the theory of skirmishing, and from time to time gave orders: *Avancez en tirailleurs! Feu à volonté! Visez haut!* These commands, especially the latter, were obeyed with alacrity, the men firing at the trees on the ramparts as if they were Prussians. Although the men had muzzle-loaders, yet some were supposed to be firing with breech-loaders, and made a pretence of loading accordingly, never putting their hand to a place where a pouch ought to have been, but merely acting as though they were opening and shutting a snuff-box. Judging by the rapidity of their movements, the breech-loaders they are to receive will blaze away a good many rounds per minute. Most of the men, however, were

engaged in position drill. Then they formed in battalion, and performed sundry evolutions in so clumsy a manner that the officers gave it up in despair, split the battalion into squads of six and ten men, and ordered skirmishing again. This seemed to afford the men no small delight, which was expressed by a general hurrah. "It is difficult to teach what one is ignorant of one's self," remarked one officer to another.

Of discipline there was none. The men never saluted their officers, and spoke to them with easy, and in some cases impudent, familiarity. Some had uniforms, but few had sheaths for their bayonets or pouches for their ammunition. Everything about them was dirty. The Boulonnais found all this quite natural. "What can you expect?—they are *Mobilisés*." After drill there was a rush to the Sous-Préfecture to read the despatches, and especially a large placard signed "Léon Gambetta." This placard gave a thousand and one reasons why the wounds inflicted by Prussian arms were not to be feared; they were not so dangerous as was thought; the wound of a Prussian triangular bayonet was but the prick of a pin; and, besides, the Prussians being in such compact masses, it was easier to charge into them, as there was a certainty of driving a bayonet into somebody, &c. I may yet be able to send you a copy of this curious document. The Mobiles read every line of it, but did not seem convinced, especially as there was a wounded Turco, who did not look any the better for the treatment he had received at the hands of his enemies. He was, however, in good spirits, and was desirous of fighting as soon as he had recovered.

Later in the day I rode to Le Portel, a fishing village six miles distant, where I found another battalion of *Mobilisés* at drill. Certainly they were in better condition than those at Boulogne. When the distribution of

bread came, two companies had to go without, as there was not enough. Five or six threw down their arms; the adjutant drew out a pistol, put into it enough shot and powder to blow his hand off if he fired, and threatened to make an example. Whereupon the mutineers began to blubber, with the exception of one, who told his officer he would serve him as he had done the previous day. I inquired afterwards what that was, and was told that this very man had torn the officer's coat from off his back and roughly shaken him, without anybody interfering. There seemed to be little more than bread to eat. On the sands a dozen men were roasting a small pig, and were bargaining with a fisherman for a gull; he wanted two francs for it, and they offered eight sous for it, but the man was firm and kept his bird.

I rode back to Boulogne; the ostler of the stable whence I had hired my horse told me he had been giving instruction in riding to four officers, who, however, had got tired of it after two or three lessons, and protested against being made Uhlans of. To sum up, what I saw of the *Mobilisés* gave me but a poor idea of their capacity for fighting, and it can only be hoped that they will not for a long time have to face an enemy.

During the month, gallant Phalsburg, disdaining to capitulate, and yet having no means of prolonging its defence, opened its gates to the enemy, compelled to take this course by want of food. Montmédy also, which had long been a sharp thorn in the side of the invaders, surrendered on the 24th of December, after a severe bombardment. Mézières, which had been so often summoned and threatened, was compelled to capitulate on the second day of the new year. All these towns, the fortifications of which were constructed when the range of

artillery was very much less than it is now, suffered terribly under the bombardment.

Mr. J. Denistoun Wood, a gentleman who visited the "head-quarters" of the French Peasant Relief Fund at Sedan, wrote there, two days after the surrender of Mézières, the following account of his visit to the latter town:—

I was glad to avail myself yesterday of the invitation of M. Gulden, the Protestant pastor of this town, to accompany him to Mézières, which he had determined to visit in order to ascertain whether any of the members of his church there had been injured by the recent bombardment. We started about ten o'clock in the morning, in a small open carriage; and as the distance is only about fourteen miles, we ought to have accomplished the journey in a little more than two hours, if our horse had not been a wretched animal, which more than once came to a dead stop. The weather continued very cold (my breath freezing on my beard and moustache), and the whole country was one vast sheet of white. After some time we saw, on a little hill on the right, the Château de Belle-Vue, where the Emperor signed the capitulation, and we soon afterwards passed the house (now converted into an inn) where the famous interview took place between him and Bismarck. Then came into view a hill with a building on its summit, from which the King of Prussia and Moltke watched the battle. We now overtook endless trains of waggons, full of huge, round, flat loaves, brought all the way from Germany, and of quarters of slaughtered beasts, red and repulsive in appearance. Now and then, too, was to be seen a waggon laden with ammunition. The stream of traffic reminded me of what used to be seen along the road leading to one of the large gold-fields of Victoria, when everything that was used had to be brought from Mel-

bourne. At each entrance of one or two villages through which we passed, boards were fastened to the trees, with the words "Rinderpest, Peste Bovine," written on them, and at one spot we observed a man digging a grave for a beast. On the other side of the road we saw a man whom we at first supposed to be similarly engaged, but by-and-by made out that he was skinning a horse which had probably been killed by some stray shell. How completely roads (like everything else in this part of France) exist merely for German uses, was proved by the fingerposts, or rather boards fastened to poplars, indicating the way "nach" this place and that place. As we approached Mézières we passed barricades which had been erected across the road. If I remember rightly, there were three of them, at different points—one of planks and the other two of stones. We saw also ropes of plaited straw which had been fastened to the trees and stretched across the road, so as to impede the advance of cavalry. On crossing the railway we saw the telegraph wires trailing along the ground, but already the Germans were at work raising and stretching them. Not far from Mézières we passed a small gang of French prisoners. One could not but feel pity for the poor fellows, so I handed over all the half-franc pieces in my pocket to M. Gulden to give to them. He of course asked permission from the sergeant in charge of them, who, being accosted in German, was at first under the pleasing delusion that some sympathizing fellow-countryman wished to make him a present; but he was speedily undeceived.

As we drew still nearer to the town we were able to make out the gaunt gable-ends, with great gaps where walls should have been, and we could trace a faint cloud of smoke, but the spire of the principal church rose high in the air, apparently uninjured. At the gate we were

rather dismayed at being asked for our pass, for as the Commandant of Sedan had assured M. Gulden that none was necessary, we were not provided with any. The pastor, however, being an Alsatian, and therefore speaking German as fluently as a native, was able to persuade the sentry to allow the carriage to proceed to the guard-house, where he was to seek permission from an officer to enter the town. On reaching the guard-house, however, no officer was to be seen, and no hindrance was offered to our progress. When we reached the part of the town which had suffered most severely from the bombardment, the scene of destruction which presented itself baffles description. About one-third of Mézières, according to the computation of M. Gulden, who is well acquainted with it, lies in ruins. I had seen Bazeilles the day before, and terrible as were the traces of the work of destruction there, they were not so striking (at the present time at all events) as those in this part of Mézières. At Bazeilles the walls of the houses are standing, and the streets are free of débris, but at Mézières, in many places, the site of the house is a mere waste, and not a stone of the front wall has been left standing. The narrow streets were so choked up with fallen stones that it was difficult in many places to get along. Groups of German soldiers were picking their way over the heaps of rubbish. Some of them had made their way to some cellar, where they had discovered a treasure in the shape of bottles of wine. At one place we saw a number of people looking in, and upon inquiring the reason, we were informed by a German that a cellar had fallen in and buried five soldiers; whether or not they had been all killed was not known. We made our way to the church, and as we entered it trod upon heaps of wheat. Several shells had penetrated the building. One had come through the east window, making a great

gap in the stained glass. There were also one or two holes in the roof, through which the sky could be seen. The altar was a mass of ruins, among which I picked up as relics a broken finial, a piece of an iron ornament, and a fragment of a shell. When the Allies invested Mézières, after the battle of Waterloo, a shell was thrown into the north aisle, which has remained sticking in the roof ever since. The church will long bear more grievous traces of the siege of 1871.

It was impossible to ascertain with any certainty the number of civilians who were killed during the bombardment. We heard some accounts, which were probably greatly exaggerated. One woman told us, with much emotion, of fourteen persons having been killed in a cellar, among them a woman who had just been delivered of her first child, together with the baby and the midwife. A young officer informed M. Gulden that the total number of the civil population killed was but twenty eight, and that there were very few wounded. We had some *bouillon* at the house of a confectioner, an old man, who told us, trembling with excitement, how his other house had been destroyed. We found huddled together in a room at the bottom of a court the family of a druggist, whose house had been utterly swept away. Here and there wandered through the streets gendarmes and swordless French officers. We had unfortunately little opportunity of looking about us, for no one was allowed to leave the town after two o'clock; and as our sluggish horse had made our journey a long one, our stay in Mézières was extremely limited. However, M. Gulden and I have just arranged to go again to-morrow by an omnibus, which is now running daily between it and Sedan. We were considerably delayed in leaving by the stream of waggons which was pouring through the narrow streets. Many of the houses that are still stand-

ing bear the marks of shells. Close to the gate lay a dead horse, with a hole in its shoulder, and a pool of blood beside it, and a foot or two off was the red cap of a soldier. At her earnest entreaty we took up a woman into our carriage to get her out of the town. She had come from Sedan to see her son, who was a soldier, but he had been marched away as a prisoner before her arrival. On our way back to Sedan we passed the carriage of Colonel Lennox, R.E., driving into Mézières, and we afterwards saw a train moving along the railway. As it was after five when we reached Sedan, we found the gate closed; however, after some little delay, we obtained admission. At Sedan it is said to-day that 300 persons are missing at Mézières, but no reliance can be placed upon such rumours. In fact, until the ruins of the houses have been somewhat cleared away, it must be impossible to know how many have perished.

The bombardment commenced at seven on Saturday morning, and lasted, without intermission, until noon on Sunday. It is said that a white flag was hung out at seven on Sunday morning, but it was not observed by the Germans. M. Gulden told me that while he was reading the prayers in his church on Sunday he distinctly heard at intervals the sound of the canonade—a solemn kind of response.

Out of the German occupation of the north and north-western departments of France an incident arose, in the month of December, which, in certain easily conceivable states of the public mind in this country, might have suddenly extended the area of the war, and perhaps entirely changed its issues.

On the 28th of December, the Correspondent at Havre wrote:—

The all-absorbing topic at present is the gross and fla-

grant insult to the British flag by the Prussians, at Duclair, on Wednesday last. English residents, English merchants and brokers, are wild with indignation that such a cool and deliberate outrage should be perpetrated in the broad daylight, within a day's sail of England, and within less than thirty miles of an English gunboat. Here are the facts:—Six vessels, flying the Union Jack, provided with the necessary passports, permits, &c., after discharging their cargoes of coal, are quietly sailing down the river, when on reaching Duclair they are deliberately fired at, boarded by Prussian soldiers, scuttled, and sunk; the crews have barely time to escape, leaving their money and effects behind them; they are obliged to pass the night without shelter; next day they make their way to Rouen, and are sent home *via* Dieppe by the English Consul.

We are anxious to know what action the authorities will take in the matter. It is a sad state of affairs if such a violation of neutrality passes unnoticed. The *Journal du Havre*, commenting on the subject, says: "We are convinced that England, so proud of the privileges of her citizens, will inquire quickly into this affair. In it her honour, her dignity, and her security are at stake. If she allows such an act to be committed with impunity, she will lower herself in the rank of nations to the fourth order."

It is to be hoped that the Admiralty will see the necessity of sending us a more formidable war-vessel to protect English interests than the tiny little gunboat at present here, which is, no doubt, a model of tidiness and smartness, as her officers are of courtesy and kindness; but that is not quite enough under the present circumstances, and we ought to have a vessel at least equal in size to the other men-of-war of various nations at present in the harbour.

The latest intelligence of the movements of the Prussians in this district is that they are in considerable force at Yvetot, where they seem to have fixed their headquarters. Yesterday about 200 entered Bolbec, and imposed a requisition for 500 sacks of oats. There is a strong reconnoitring party of French in the neighbourhood of Saint Romain, but no skirmish has taken place since Saturday ; on which day it is stated that several houses in the town of Bolbec sustained serious damage from the fire of the cannon on both sides, and that several of the inhabitants were severely wounded. The *Francs-tireurs* who were killed in the engagement were interred with all honour, while those who fell into the hands of the enemy were, it is stated, shot immediately. It is the general opinion that those free-shooting corps have no mercy to expect from the enemy, should they fall into his hands ; therefore it is that they are generally brave in action, and fight to the last before surrendering. General Moquart has come into Havre to rest his men ; and indeed the soldiers require rest and the comforts of life more than usual during this trying weather, particularly those who are doing outpost duty. They are relieved every hour, yet I am told that two men were frozen to death while on duty near Harfleur on Christmas Eve.

From Rouen we hear that the inhabitants are feeling sensibly the presence of the Germans amongst them. A letter from that city is published in to-day's *Journal*, in which the writer says they are completely at the mercy of Manteuffel, and that their streets and promenades are encumbered with Prussian soldiers. He describes provisions as being frightfully dear, and does not know how people will get on should this state of things last long. Everything that arrives in the market, even the tobacco, is reserved exclusively for the enemy,

and the inhabitants must go without the enjoyment of smoking. An English gentleman who came from Rouen yesterday affirms that the Prussian army in Normandy numbers only about 25,000 men. He says that by their marching and countermarching they establish the impression that they are double the number. He gives, as an example, that on Tuesday morning last a body of men, numbering 10,000, and carrying with them thirty-nine pieces of cannon, left Rouen by the road to Caen, and that some hours after, the same body, with the same number of cannon, re-entered the town by the Oissel road, thereby making it appear to the inhabitants that one column of men had left while another entered. The French authorities, I am sure, have cognizance of this stratagem, and cannot be deceived by such fantastic movements.

Dec. 30.—What steps are the authorities about to take in the affair of Duclair? Will England allow such an outrage to go by unpunished? These and similar questions are what one hears on all sides. And yet, as I telegraphed to you to-day, the Germans have not stopped at Duclair in offering their daring and deliberate insults to the British flag. After firing on and sinking six vessels sailing under the English flag on the 21st instant, at Duclair, they seize a seventh, lying in the port of Rouen, on the 24th, force her crew ashore, and tow her down the river, no doubt to share the same fate as those that left before her.

The French journals certainly have reason to comment at length on this affair, and it will tend much to widen the breach at present existing between us should the Government of England pass the matter over lightly. If it is not taken in hand at once, sternly and resolutely, if sufficient apology and reparation are not immediately exacted, the whole business will appear to French eyes

very much like a second edition of the Alabama affair. But what apology or reparation can Count Bismarck make for so cool and premeditated an affair? The journals of this evening publish extracts on the subject from all the English papers. Three French men-of-war went up the Seine yesterday, but it is feared they cannot reach Duclair in consequence of the sinking of those vessels. There are two other English vessels still at Rouen, but I dare say they will be taken, if they have not been seized already, by the Prussian soldiers to complete the blockade, or the barrier rather, in the Seine. English vessels coming near Dieppe, Fecamp, or other seaport towns occupied by the Germans must in future look out, or their crews may be replaced by soldiers wearing spiked helmets and carrying the authority of King William in their pocket.

The sailors who arrived in London from Duclair gave very contradictory accounts of the treatment they had received from the Prussians. It appeared, however, that they had been suddenly and peremptorily ordered to leave their vessels, and that by officers who, not understanding the English language, were not able to make an operation disagreeable in itself less unpleasant by courteous explanation. When the facts became known, it appeared that the British colliers had been seized as an act of military necessity by order of the Prussian General commanding the district. The French were approaching the town with gunboats, with which they had once before inflicted heavy loss on the enemy, and the colliers were seized, partly to prevent their falling into the hands of the French, and partly in order that by sinking them the Germans might render the river unnavigable. The subject was treated by the English press with great moderation, and with a disposition not to see in the act more than those who had committed

it had intended. The Prussian Government sent a semi-official communication to the German press, in which it was represented that although these ships were the property of neutrals, they were seized in waters subject to the legitimate authority of a belligerent engaged in active operations of war. According to the law of nations, men-of-war, if belonging to a neutral Power, are inviolable; even in waters where war is going on; but merchantmen do not partake of the same privilege, and come under the law of the locality in which they may happen to find themselves. The seizure in this case was not a political, but a purely military measure. French men-of-war having repeatedly steamed up the river, and, by landing troops and firing at the German posts, inflicted damage upon them, it was probable that the English ships would be impressed by the French commanders, and used for similar operations. The Germans clearly owed it to themselves to forestall such a contingency, and by sinking the ships close the mouth of the river. The embargo laid upon the ships, therefore, was a perfectly justifiable measure. The right of embargo in such a dilemma legally belongs to every State, and has been frequently exercised by all in turn. At the same time, this right involves the duty of allowing ample compensation; as the right has been taken advantage of, so will the duty be fulfilled by the German Government.

These explanations were accepted in England probably less for their technical value than for the evidence they offered of a fair and equitable disposition on the part of the Germans, and they were soon followed by the communication to Earl Granville of the subjoined message from Count Bismarck to Count Bernstorff:—

“Versailles, Jan. 8, 1871.

“The report of the Commander of that part of our army

by which the English collier-ships were sunk in the Seine has not yet arrived; but, as far as our intelligence goes, the general outline of the facts is known.

"You are authorized, in consequence, to say to Lord Granville, that we sincerely regret that our troops, in order to avert immediate danger, were obliged to seize ships which belonged to British subjects.

"We admit their claim to indemnification, and shall pay to the owners the value of the ships, according to equitable estimation, without keeping them waiting for the decision of the question who is finally to indemnify them. Should it be proved that excesses have been committed which were not justified by the necessity of defence, we should regret it still more, and call the guilty persons to account.

"The official answer to Lord Augustus Loftus' note will follow after the report from the army has been received."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE first consequence of the failure of General Trochu's sortie of December 21 was a resolution on the part of the German commanders to proceed to more active measures against the defences of Paris. Until this time, the Germans, instead of erecting works as for an active siege, had fortified themselves within their own lines, constructing redoubts and batteries on all the chief points of the encircling lines of investment, until the latter were rendered impregnable. But the use which the French had made of Mont Avron in the recent sortie, and the valuable support which their operations obtained from that work, led them to resolve to compel the besieged to contract their circle of defence. In the sortie of November 30 the French had pushed forward their whole eastern line and seized a strip of ground, about two miles in width, from Drancy to the Marne near Neuilly, which had before been debatable, and which included a new commanding position on the plateau of Avron. On the 21st of December this position was made the starting-point of an attack which led to the capture of Ville Evrart and Maison Blanche. The Germans determined to destroy it as a French military position, and with a rapidity and secrecy which surprised everybody, erected batteries for that purpose.

The Special Correspondent with the Army of the Crown Prince of Saxony, who had witnessed the preparations for the bombardment, wrote from Chelles on the 27th of December :—

The bombardment of Mont Avron—that event which has for days past formed the chief topic of discussion and for anticipation—commenced this morning. Interesting as the topic was, I was naturally precluded from dwelling upon it with that detail which would have been desirable, and the same necessity for reserve compels me even now to withhold many particulars of great interest. For many nights past—indeed ever since the change of policy which I noted as having taken place immediately after the great sortie at Champigny and Villiers—the woods which cover the German advanced positions before Montfermeil and Clichy have been full of life. Working parties toiled in the dark, or by moonlight; then came the heavy roll of the siege artillery, and of the tumbrels weighted with the heavy ammunition. For some days past the guns have been in position, and, indeed, I believe a couple of experimental shots were fired so early as the 24th instant. The delay took place in order that a full supply of ammunition should be brought. Whether it has attained the object I am not in a position to state. About half the guns were carried direct by the Soissons Railway to the last available station on the foreposts, and were almost immediately placed in position on the batteries. The rest came *vid* Lagny, and were destined for the more southerly batteries. Most of the guns are from Spandau, and have already done more or less service in the sieges of Strasbourg, Toul, La Fert, and Soissons. It would be improper for me at the present juncture to particularize either their calibre or number. Those familiar with German siege artillery will require no special information on this point. There can be no harm in roughly denoting the positions of the batteries, since the fire of to-day must have effectually revealed this much at least to the French. They begin on the south, on the farther side of the

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Marne, in close proximity to Noisy-le-Grand. There is a gap across the valley of Chelles, but they begin again where the height of Montfermeil pits out into the plain, and continue at intervals with a slight sweep, of which the convexity is towards Avron, farther to the north than, and in front of, the village of Raincy. The French have been working hard on and around Avron ever since the 2nd; indeed before it. It is understood that in all, standing opposite our batteries, and in a position to reply to them, there are about sixty cannon, exclusive, of course, of those on the forts. These are chiefly, if not altogether, naval guns, of recent construction and considerable calibre—say 64-pounders. A few may be taken as heavier. I do not transgress the needful reticence when I state that the German batteries have, according to this computation, a numerical advantage, with possibly a parity as to weight of metal, gun for gun, and the advantage also of greater precision—a notable feature of German artillery *in se*, and backed by special shooting accuracy on the part of the gunners, who are not drawn from the field artillery, but have been specially imported from the fortresses, and are thoroughly conversant with the handling of these arms of precision. The design and construction of the batteries for the reception of the guns are the work of Colonel Oppermann, Chief of the Engineer Staff of the Maas Army, and Colonel Hoffmann, Chief of the Artillery Staff; and I am satisfied that the most experienced judges, if conversant with the positions, would admit that all that skill and knowledge, both practical and theoretical, can effect, has been bestowed on the duty. The siege train and the detailed conduct of the bombardment is, I believe, under the supervision of Colonel Barge, an officer of great experience in heavy artillery. Of course the fire of the French forts is an important

element in the consideration of the eventualities of the bombardment of Mont Avron, and it would be blindness to ignore it.

If the French have ears to hear, they could scarcely have been ignorant of the fact that something exceptional must have been going on for nights past behind the sheltering fringe of trees. It may have been that they knew all about it, and like a boxer who disdains to hit his antagonist till he has "peeled," that they refrained from disturbing the operation. Whatever was the reason, there has been comparatively little firing on the works during their construction; nor do I believe that the half-hearted and disastrous forward move on Ville Evrart and La Maison Blanche, on the afternoon of the 21st, had any reference to an attempt to interrupt the preparations. Had such been the case, artillery would surely have been brought up, and the posts which were occupied on the evacuation of the Saxon advance guards would have been held and strengthened in such a manner as would have prevented their re-capture the same night under the absurdly easy circumstances which characterized that episode. The fact stands that it was not till the night which preceded the commencement of the bombardment that the French batteries seemed to awake to the position. All night long the Saxon pioneers were hard at work with their keen axes cutting down, ungratefully but necessarily, the friendly trees which had sheltered their previous labours. It is the way of the world—to the devil with a friend when you have no further need for him. Among the Saxon woodmen who did not spare those trees came not a few shells during the night, not only to their discomfort, but to that of the battalions who, ever since the guns were placed in position, were sent on to the foreposts

nightly to double the usual guards for the protection of the big toys in the front.

It was, I believe, originally intended that the firing should begin at seven o'clock. Half an hour before, I was out in the cold morning air, listening for the first booming report, the emblem and herald, as it would be, of a new phase of the war, and, let us hope, of an early termination. Seven passed, and all was still silent—for the French had left off their firing. Eight came, and the keenness of expectancy became absolutely painful. Was the whole thing after all a snare, and a feint? Were these "quakers" whose cold sides I had leaned against the day before, and was the ammunition beside each a "dummy?" No; the evidences of one's senses contradicted this. Was, then, the day postponed yet once again? No, only the hour. At exactly a quarter to nine the first gun crashed its report below me in front of Montfermeil, and I could hear its angry whiz as it cut the air in crossing the intervening space. In three minutes more the air was full of a din of deep diapason. There was nothing to see, and I saw it—such may serve as a summary of my day's work. At daylight the snow had begun to fall, not heavily and in big flakes, but in feathery particles, which filled and whitened the air, making obstacles invisible a quarter of a mile off. Of course the gunners had got their sights and ranges the day before, and their shot must have been "there or thereabouts," but Avron was as invisible as if it had been on the farther side of the North Pole. The work gave one the idea of fighting with knives in a dark room. At first it seemed as if the French artillerymen were taken by surprise. It was not till nine o'clock that Avron sent back the first instalment of its reply. When it did begin, though,

it went to work with a will, but rather wildly, the shells flying about promiscuously in a fashion that impaired the safety of any given point. By ten this duel in the dark was in full sway, the air incessantly lacerated and tortured by the whistle of the projectiles, so that one might have imagined himself in a calm at sea, with the rush of a coming squall bearing down upon him. The German fire was like clockwork; three times I timed the number of rounds fired in a minute, and the results were—24, 23, 25. Of course these figures are valueless as indication of the rapidity of the firing, without information as to the number of the guns, which I am not at liberty to give; but they afford remarkable evidence of the systematic steadiness of the practice. The French fire came more in spurts and gusts, and then was silent for some half a minute. When in full blaze it was so rapid as to be continuous, and not admit of being timed itself, or of one timing the German fire. About eleven the batteries at Bondy—as well as I could judge by the direction of the sound—took up their parable, and were replied to by the extreme right flank of the German position, which has been designed amiably looking towards the said Bondy, with a view to such a demonstration. All day long the fire continued, with no great variation to speak of. Perhaps it was heaviest from twelve till two. After that hour the French fire seemed to slacken visibly. There were longer intervals between the spurts, and the spurts were not so animated. The forts of Rosny and Nogent, however, chimed in occasionally, covering the slackness of Avron's efforts. About sundown there was a marked weakness in the enemy's fire, the German fire continuing meanwhile in a steady, slogging, stolid fashion. As I write (nine o'clock at night) both sides have partially suspended operations. About every five minutes I hear

a report, but cannot say from which it comes. No doubt to-morrow the air will be again full of sound.

This bombardment of Mont Avron is taken here generally as but the forerunner of a more extended effort on the south, to commence with the Meudon batteries on the 29th instant. This is the current gossip. I am not in possession of any official information on the subject, and would not give it if I were. All day long the troops on the eastern side stood in quarters ready for anything that might turn up, and some batteries of guard field artillery were actually out in the cold behind Pont Iblon—but there was no hostile demonstration. At an early hour this morning Prince George of Saxony came to Chelles with the design, no doubt, of witnessing the commencement of the bombardment—Chelles being the most eligible place—but the snow in the air hid everything, and hearing was the only sense called into requisition.

It seems the French are refining on the “legitimate” horrors of war. I have seen a Chassepôt bullet—it has never been fired of course—which looks all right outside, but which when dissected is found to be in seventeen pieces, curiously jagged and angular. I suppose it will presently come to firing handfuls of rusty nails and the clippings of zinc roofs.

Margency, December 28.—The bombardment of Mont Avron, of the commencement of which yesterday morning you are already aware, has been attended with the happiest results. After the despatch of my letter of last night the firing continued sluggishly during the darkness, and this morning the French ability to reply, measured at all events by their reply, was so feeble as to admit of a considerable further relaxation on the part of the Germans. During the day their firing has been continued at the rate of about five to eight shots per

minute, chiefly from the guns on the right hand batteries in front of Raincy. These batteries have been, in the words of Mr. Swiveller, a "staggerer" to Mont Avron. The French batteries on that commanding position were for the most part constructed to dominate the valley of the Marne. Thus they could cope face to face with our batteries at Noisy-le-Grand, they could sweep the "horseshoe," they could pound into Chelles, till a man was thankful when he was out of it, and they could even send their missiles into Montfermeil. But that was the most northerly point on which they looked out. Consequently our batteries farther north, in front of Raincy, actually enfiladed the batteries and parallels of Mont Avron, throwing in a flanking fire, against which there was no defence. Of course a short time would have remedied this defect. Even in frosty weather a battery can nearly as soon alter its face as can a hypocrite his, but just as the mask fails the hypocrite *in extremis*, so it becomes impossible for the battery to change its front in the teeth of a heavy and unrelenting fire. This circumstance accounts for the collapse of the Avron batteries earlier than I allowed myself to anticipate. There seems to be no question as to the collapse; the fire is all but extinguished, and the four battalions of French infantry which were supporting the gunners when the firing began yesterday morning are known to have fallen back off the table-land with considerable loss. Our casualties from yesterday's fire are twenty-three men killed and wounded. I am surprised that it should have been so heavy, spite of the unquestionably heavy fire, since the artillerymen are protected by solid parapets, seven feet high, and the supporting infantry are sheltered in the parallel by earthen protections of equal height. The more one thinks of it, the more one is astonished at the thoroughness of the surprise which the

French have allowed themselves to suffer. How complete this has been is obvious from the fact that our right flank batteries so thoroughly raked their positions as I have stated. Had they the remotest conception that batteries were ready to be unmasked behind the trees right under their nose, they would have surely taken measures at least to protect themselves from this flanking fire, when they could have done so by a few hours' labour of a body of men with spades and pickaxes, even if they could not have done more in the way of organizing a more or less effective reply.

It is confidently anticipated that by to-morrow afternoon not only will the last gun be silenced on Mont Avron, but that the French will have bodily evacuated the position. What will happen should that anticipation prove correct, or approximately correct, I shall not waste time in conjecturing, for the simple reason that there is no occasion for me to conjecture; but there would be much indiscretion in definite allusion to ulterior projects.

Yesterday and to-day Paris has had shell-fire brought home to her. The rampageous men of Belleville, who remained at a discreet distance from the bursting shells on the banks of the Marne, have had these missiles exploding in their midst. Père-la-Chaise may have had strange destructive visitors among its tombs. But it was chiefly into the arrondissement of La Villette, that congeries of goods stations, canal basins, slaughter-houses, and factories, that the batteries of Raincy sent their shells. In all, over a dozen were fired, only experimentally, and as a broad hint that whence these came there were lots more. The range is no great feat—only some 7,000 paces. It must have been a new sensation to the artillerymen in Forts Aubervilliers and Romanville to listen to the whiz of shells in the air high over their heads, and to listen to the crash of the explosions in their rear. The

forts have been strangely quiet during the two days. It follows that if batteries can shoot over them, they, with at least equal weight of metal, can touch the batteries; but they have hardly tried to do so. I don't know for certain that they have fired a shot.

Other results have been attained by the two days' work. The German batteries did not all face Mont Avron. They "set to partners," with a view to other contingencies than the mere silencing of Mont Avron. The 22-gun battery farthest to the right has two fronts. Its left portion looks to Avron; then, by the formation of a very obtuse angle, its right flank is thrown back and faces low on Bondy and Baubigny. It was from the guns on this section that La Villette got its "baptism of fire." This arrangement was devised to admit of the engaging of the French batteries in front of Bondy. There has been a feeble fire from that quarter, but of a character calculated to give the impression that the batteries which were believed to be there are elsewhere, and other circumstances to which I shall presently allude tend to confirm that idea. The French, although the large force of four divisions, if not more, which they maintained on the Bondy-Baubigny-Courneuve line for three days—commencing with the 21st instant, has partially dispersed and fallen back, still maintained, it is believed, quite a division, with its left on Bondy, and its right retired on the railway station at Baubigny. The camp occupied by this body has been broken up in the course of to-day, no doubt in consequence of the fire directed towards the positions named. That same railway station at Baubigny (on the Strasburg line) was of immense utility to the French in many obvious ways. If the German fire of yesterday and to-day has not convinced the French of the inadvisability of using the line so far for the future, the fact of its being commanded by the

Raincy batteries cannot fail to be of incalculable importance to the Germans in the event of any renewal of the French attempt to break out or extend their ground in the Le Bourget direction. There are sufficient indications that they mean—or perhaps one should speak in the past tense, and say meant—not to abandon finally their efforts in that quarter. They have constructed—I don't know indeed that they are finished—no fewer than six batteries at intervals across the plain between Courneuve and Drancy, pretty much on the line on which I described their infantry as standing on the afternoon of the 23rd. These could only have been intended to support an attack on Le Bourget by dealing more formidably than could field artillery either without *emplacements*, or in *emplacements* hastily thrown up with the German artillery, that is ready at a moment's notice to take up the Pont Iblon-Aulnay-Sevran line behind the inundations—that position which I have ventured to describe as virtually an entrenched camp. It was on this line that the German artillery stood on the 21st, and where, although unable to prevent the temporary capture of Le Bourget by the French, it paralyzed their succeeding efforts, and covered effectually the successful effort of the Guards for its recapture. That we should, therefore, have had warm work again in that quarter in a day or two, I have no manner of doubt: we may have so still. But these big-gun batteries at Raincy materially complicate the position for the French in any such essay. For these batteries, as a glance at your map will show you, rake the French batteries between Drancy and Courneuve; while the latter were firing on Le Bourget and Pont Iblon, the German gunners on the northern face of the Raincy batteries would be sending in upon the unprotected side of each French battery such a fire as must very soon

cause them to desist. In effect, as I estimate the position, the Raincy batteries have made the Drancy-Courneuve batteries untenable, and have conclusively stopped the way for any repetition of an attempt to make a sortie in the Le Bourget-Pont Iblon direction.

But a series of lines, posts, fortifications, and so on, with which the French have begirt their capital, has pretty much the same attributes as one of those bladders which the children play with in the streets. If you punch into it in one place it either bursts, or then it must bulge out somewhere else. Now Paris won't "burst" just yet, to all appearance—taking the word burst as a synonyme for capitulate. So I take it she is almost bound, now that the Germans are punching in—indeed have punched in—upon her circumference about Mont Avron, to bulge out somewhere else with a big sortie. Where she will haply swell, I have not the remotest notion. But I don't think it will be on my ground. The affair at Stains on the 21st has been made more of in the Versailles telegram than it merited. I think you may safely set down an *ausfall* of any other proportions than a demonstration, and occurring anywhere between Gonesse and St. Germain; not, indeed, as an utter impossibility physically, but as being impossible in a military sense, because certain on the face of things to be utterly disastrous in its results. But the quiet days are seemingly over—the days when one had day after day nothing to chronicle, and where he was driven to the unprofitable and arduous experiment of making bricks without straw. As to the proximity of a general bombardment on the south side, my colleague will be able to afford you more reliable information than I can pretend to do.

This question of a general bombardment of Paris presents two distinct phases, and the full distinction between the two I have nowhere seen brought out plainly. There is

the bombardment of the forts as a preliminary either to bombardment of the *enceinte*, and subsequent storm of the city, or to a capitulation dictated to the inhabitants and garrison by the consideration that with the reduction of the outlying forts has gone their last ray of real hope. And there is the immediate bombardment of the city, necessitating a simultaneous engagement and adequate coping with the fire of the outlying forts. In the former alternative we have, as it were, two men fighting with daggers, with nothing to distract them. They go at it fiercely, and it may be that he who attacks has the best of it, in which case it is all over with the man who has his back to the wall, and to everything behind that wall. But it is possible also that the bout may be a drawn one, and this contingency involves serious consequences to the attacker. True, it would seem that he would only be where he was before he began offensive operations, and the ultimate event would be the same, under the coercion of starvation, as if he had never raised his hand to strike. But his prestige would be radically sapped, and the other side would take proportionate encouragement. It might be that his ultimate success would be seriously endangered.

Now, consider the other alternative. Here, if the premises are what they ought to be, you have a man with a dagger, and also a long lance, engaging with a man who has only his dagger. The former does not, then, require to win the dagger-duel to ensure him the success he is eager for; all that he needs is to make that a drawn battle. If he can keep in play (technically, "engage") the dagger-holder with his own shorter weapon, while with his longer weapon he is sedulously poking over the other's head at what lies behind him—viz., his vitals—he inevitably wins the day. The lance in the simile I have chosen represents a few batteries of very far-reaching

guns, which the Germans must have if they would bombard Paris. If they have, or will have these, and have other batteries besides capable of "engaging" the forts, then success seems within their grasp. Frankly, I question whether they will be able to do any great things by a systematic bombardment of the forts, and the forts alone. An equal weight of metal gives them no advantage, but bodes, indeed, their failure. Remember how many days of bombardment it cost us, and what pyramids of projectiles we threw before we rendered the Malakoff untenable. And we were close to the sea-board; yet, nevertheless, we had to pause again and again for supplies of ammunition. Every projectile thrown by the Germans represents arduous and long-continued toil to bring it to the cannon's mouth. We may depend the Parisians will strain every nerve to return the fire and to repair the damage it causes. It would then appear that to operate against the forts successfully would require both a stronger artillery, whether in calibre or in number, than that possessed by the French, and a large and continuous supply of ammunition. But a comparatively small array of artillery—of such weapons of precision as the German artillery consists of, and with the dexterous German artillerymen—would suffice to keep the guns of the forts in play, so that they could divert none of their attention; while a few guns of longer range were meanwhile negating the forts altogether, and pounding directly into Paris. The adoption of this expedient, supposing it successful, would save the carriage of the vast quantities of ammunition which a lengthened bombardment of the forts would necessitate. I have already given it as my humble conviction that a very short duration of such practice would suffice to end the siege, and with but comparatively little loss either of life or of property.

Highly creditable to the German besiegers are the friendly, and indeed cordial, terms which they have contrived to establish with the villagers around Paris. These, indeed, are mostly of the humbler classes, either labouring folk or the servants left in the villas, and nothing could exceed the kindness with which they are treated by those whom circumstances have so strangely placed among them, while they, for their part, appear to feel and appreciate this kindness. They are all picking up some little German, while the German soldiers are becoming quite proficient in a guttural broken French. In the early days, by Sedan and by Metz, it seemed as if the French summarized the whole German language in an emphatic "nix," but now they are going deeper into the mysteries of the language. I have a Frenchman here in Margency, who is a fund of recurrent amusement to me. He is the gardener of the château in which I have rooms, and he and his wife remained behind in charge of the place. I casually discovered how handy and obliging were the pair, and how much better I should be waited on by the same than by the willing but clumsy German *diener*. I am rather a transitory resident, however, as the various places from which my letters are dated serve to indicate; but each time I come back, honest Auguste has a surprise for me in the acquisitions of German, which he has made during my absence. Apart from what may be called "household words," the French peasant's acquisition of German chiefly develops itself in the direction of ability to put questions as to the state of the war and the probable period of its termination. On the other hand, the first French that a German learns is invariably the numerals and the appellations and values of the current coins. If every German soldier is not a master of Mr. Goschen's "Theory of Foreign Exchanges," he is, at all events, thoroughly at home

in the relative values of French and German money, and when you now price a thing with a German "kaufmann" or *marketender*, it is as likely as not that he names the cost in francs and sous instead of thalers and groschen.

Livry, Dec. 29.—My location is in Margency, and there are advantages connected with that location as a head-quarter which I should be foolish to forfeit. But Margency is due north of Paris, and important operations perversely persist in taking place due east of Paris. I cannot give up Margency. I cannot stay there and take information at second hand so long as I am not blind; and I have not achieved the valuable distinguishing characteristic of Sir Boyle Roche's bird, in being in two places at once. It would be a great convenience, and save horse and man no end of hard work. When I got to Margency yesterday, after a long and cold ride, a good friend quietly told me that I had better be somewhere near Mont Avron to-night. There was nothing for it but to ride back again to the east side, and it is quite on the cards that I have had my ride for nothing.

Last night our batteries definitely shut up Mont Avron. It is "dead," in the expressive German phrase. For the first time for several weeks its sides were traversed by German patrols, who saw or heard nothing indicative of life. It is believed men and guns have alike cleared off it. Perhaps it is just as well both for the men and guns, for before this information certain Saxon infantrymen were looking to the contents of their ammunition pouches and the setting of their bayonets, and certain artillerymen were handling long nails, which a not very vivid imagination might conjecture were for spiking purposes. The effect which these preparations portended was rendered unnecessary by the evacuation, and Avron is once again, as in the early days, neutral ground.

How long it may remain so it might be inconvenient to prognosticate.

To-day the German batteries have been in full work against Fort Rosny, which has by no means allowed the transaction to be a one-sided one. Rosny has its satellites in the shape of batteries, and they chiefly have devoted themselves to the reply. It is believed that the fort has in a great measure denuded itself of artillery for their supply. The German batteries have also found leisure for an occasional salutation, not only in the direction of Bondy and Grand Drancy, but also of Paris itself, La Villette being the mark. Other German batteries are in course of completion on the north-east side, which will not only reduce to an absurdity any effort against Le Bourget, but will make the position of Fort Auber-villiers a little critical after preliminaries have been settled in the direction of Drancy.

Clichy, Dec. 30.—The term "elasticity," as applied to the German outposts on this face of the environment, was matter for some derision when the attribute had to be exercised in a convex direction. But it must not be forgotten that if a line is elastic at all, it may be indented both ways. The elasticity, I must own, was pretty well tested in the outward direction—the tension was too strong to be pleasant. But now the suppleness is coming into play the other way. The artillery practice of the last three days has cleared the German front wonderfully. Last night the Saxon patrols were in Bondy, and there found silence and desertion. They were in Villemomble, in front of Raincy; and that village is now once again established as a regular Saxon outpost. Neuilly, which the French had continuously held from the beginning of the siege, they hold no longer, and our patrols perambulate it during the night. It is too near Nogent, while as yet Nogent's teeth are

unblunted, to be occupied regularly as a post; but there is a good time coming. Launay is also ours once more, and Gagny, which conventionally had never been utterly lost, is again Saxon beyond all question. The outpost line has made a real stride in the right direction; and as an evidence of this, take the change which the forward movements have made to the northward of the positions of which I have been speaking. It was but the other day that I had to refer to the position of Le Bourget, projected right forward, at the apex of a triangle, standing alone out there in the plain, with Drancy almost between it and the line of the German outposts. Now the tables are turned. It is Drancy which is the Pharos away in the foreground of the French position, with Le Bourget in a line with it—indeed overlapping it on the north, and Bondy, patrolled by the Germans, nearer Paris than it on the south. If Ducrot is there still, he must feel his position sufficiently precarious. I think it quite probable that in a day or two a patrol, slyly creeping up to the confines of Drancy, will find that village also abandoned and silent.

The patrols had in the course of yesterday afternoon groped their way up the sides of Mont Avron, and brought back word that there were no French to be seen in the vicinity. But the night had fallen, and the young moon had risen, before Hauptmann von Xanthier, of the 2nd Battalion of the 103rd Regiment, stepped out on to the platform of the Raincy-Villemomble Station, where his company had its outpost quarters for the night, and summoned to turn out the first four patrols. Out tumbled the sturdy fellows, shaking off them the straw, as hens do the loose feathers, and falling into their places with that rapid silent method that speaks of real discipline. When the sergeant reported "all right," the little band, eighty in number, marched off

the platform and took its steady way through the scattered village of Villemomble. Outside it we came—for I was an unattached companion of the gallant Hauptmann—on detached châteaux, standing in their grounds on the plain—residences that had been beautiful once, but which were now ghastly in their utter ruin. Straight on went the road, till one began to feel the gradual rise. We were on the slope of Avron. Then it bent to the left, for the hill was too steep to climb direct, and in the bend we came among the trees and brush, out of the middle of which are dug clearings, on which châteaux are built, looking out over the plain to the north. About half-way up the ascent we came on the line of French vedette-posts. They had certainly been very fond of Avron. What between barricades, entrenchments, rifle-pits, and loopholed houses, many a stout Teuton would have gone down before that position could have been forcibly carried over which we passed so peaceably in the silent moonlight. Working always round to the left, we reached the crest of the hill on that face of the plateau which looks out on Montfermeil, and where the summit is marked by the batteries. Once inside them, there met our eyes one of the weirdest scenes that imagination could conjure up. Ground ploughed with shells, embrasures stove in, parallels all but obliterated, and yet not a single cannon left behind. But if the French have removed their cannon, they have left their dead. One slides and stumbles over a little ice puddle. The ice blushes up red in his face—it is frozen human blood. Behind the batteries and inside the breastworks the dead lie thick. Dead! No man who has long followed this war but must be so familiar with the aspect of slain men, that the original thrill and turn of the blood at the sight is a memory of the past at which he all but smiles. But the terrible ghast-

liness of these dead transcends anything I have ever seen or even dreamt of in the shuddering nightmare after my first battle-field. Remember how they were slain. Not with the nimble bullet of the needle-guns that drills a minute hole through a man and leaves him undisfigured, unless it has chanced to strike his face; not with the trenchant sabre cut of the dragoon; not with the sharp stab of the bayonet; but slaughtered with missiles of terrible weight, shattered into fragments by explosions of many pounds of powder, mangled and torn by massive fragments of iron. There lay behind one of the embrasures a form utterly headless—I suppose the shell had struck the hapless being full in the face and carried head and throat before it in its fierce rush. The guillotine could not have performed the operation more cleanly.

But what need to dwell in detail on such a topic? Let it suffice that there lay the unburied and abandoned dead among the snow stained with their blood, and with the depressions in those ghastly faces turned up to the calm moonlight, drifted up by the snow-flakes which had fallen since they had been shot down. When will they be buried? When will these wan faces cease to look up into the eyes of the moon, in silent but eloquent protestation against the institution called war? When will the stray human fragments over which one stumbles as he goes be gathered together, and their ghastliness be hidden beneath friendly earth? Not yet. Men will not dig graves as if they were blasting tunnels, and the earth is as hard as the bowels of Mont Cenis. The corpses on Mont Avron must lie there till a thaw comes. How long after it would be rash to prognosticate. That gruesome group in the camp here, who had been sitting round the fire when the shells came and burst in it and blew one and all of them into the other world,

must remain as it is—a horrible mockery of conviviality, for a time at least. To look at the group from a little distance one would conclude that its members, lying or seated in a circle, were hobnobbing genially round a common pot or eating out of one dish. Come nearer and look inside that ring of squatting men, or what once were men. I care not how inured you are to sights of horror, you will turn away sick and scared from that circle of carnage. Great God! that man should be able so to mangle his fellow-man, made in thine image!

Behind the batteries, besides the relics I have alluded to, were found many evidences of the precipitation with which the French had evacuated the position. There were lots of wine—we drank some of it standing there among the dead—and piles of loaves, which the Saxon soldiers skewered on their bayonets. There were blankets, too, and military saddles, one of which, an officer's, Hauptmann von Xanthier philosophically annexed. Both in and about the camp, lying farther back, there was a considerable quantity of rice, and also many blankets, shoes, and soldiers' knapsacks. Lumps of horseflesh lay about or hung on cross-sticks. Investigations amongst the tents and mud huts brought to light bottles of rum and bags of peas. The ground was strewn with Chasse-pôts, and behind the batteries, as well as in the battery magazines, were gunpowder bags, containing each a charge, as well as many projectiles. The camp, and indeed the whole of the plateau bore numerous traces of lengthened occupation. The French are the beastliest campers in the world, and they seem to have been exceptionally beastly in Mont Avron. Behind the camp lay the little straggling village of Avron, still smoking from the fire that raged in it during the morning. Whether kindled by a Prussian shell or by the last Frenchman, I do not know.

There was not a sign of life on all the plateau, except a lurching cur who gnawed something under a waggon. What it was there were reasons that prevented me from investigating too closely. The greater part of the plateau has been occupied with vineyards, which are now of course trodden down and ruined. Stumbling through the stumps of the vines, I crossed the plateau and looked down over its farther verge. Below me lay the village of Rosny, easily to be distinguished by its lights. Above it was the horizon line, with Forts Rosny and Noisy standing up against the sky; and there were visible in their neighbourhood lights which seemed to indicate the new outpost line taken up by the French. Then across again to the south-eastern edge—and there lay the Marne silvered to whiteness in the moonlight; and Chelles, with its bright cottages, and Montfermeil, with its swarthy hanging woods, and the horseshoe farther to the south. How often during this month have I looked up at Avron from these spots—at Avron, hostile and dangerous; and now, here I looked down upon them from that very Avron, with its fangs drawn, and not a Frenchman near its summit.

It surprises me much, looking at the abundant evidences of precipitation visible, that the French should have removed all their cannon; and still more so, looking at the evidences of our fire, that they should have been able to do so. It is about as easy to transport a big ship about the country as it is to move a big gun after it has been dismounted; none of the French guns could have been dismounted, else we should have found both gun and carriage where the damage was done. It seems to me that the infantry men must have skedaddled in a panic, and that the artillerymen, fearing an assault from infantry, which they had no means of resisting, had removed their guns before an absolute necessity existed

for evacuation from the strength of the German fire. They were wise, if this was their reckoning.

To-day there is a languid fire going on against Fort Rosny, which is seemingly replying with only two guns. It is believed one of the guns on the batteries of this fort was dismounted yesterday. Noisy will find occasion to spend some ammunition in exchanges presently. The garrison seems paralyzed. There is no signs of a move anywhere. Perhaps they are getting up a surprise for us. It may not be generally known that, on the morning of the 27th, the day we opened our fire, the French asked for a day's armistice. As there appeared no grounds for such a request, and many reasons against granting it, it was refused.

The state of affairs at the southern front, at the close of the year, was thus described by the Correspondent at the head-quarters of the King of Prussia, in a letter dated Versailles, December 29 :—

“Oldest inhabitants” have been coming out strongly with their memories of winter weather, and the sentries have been well nigh frozen on their midnight duty, and the Seine has been quite frozen from shore to shore. I rode down to Villeneuve St. Georges yesterday morning, and crossed the river upon a bridge of ice. The country was covered with snow as far as the eye could reach, and in the middle of the valley was a strip of smooth white surface, where the ice-blocks had been pressed together into a solid mass. Alas, for the well-built bridge of the German pioneers! It had been swept away and destroyed like so much paper. The pontoons were drawn aside and saved, but the more permanent structure perished. Never had the invaders believed that they would be followed into France by their own stern climate. Every one stared at the frozen river, and walked

upon it, and hammered and stamped upon it, in blank amazement. The rash destruction which the French wrought last September against the bridges of stone and iron seemed to be partially justified when it turned out that pontoons could not remain upon the river. Here was Villeneuve St. Georges reduced to an ice-bridge, whilst the heavy traffic went round by Corbeil. It did not matter much, but it was a point of advantage to those who wish for delay. Of course, the French want delay in all their adversaries' moves. A mile or two more round, a trifle of extra wear and tear for the Prussians, is a gain to the defenders of Paris. Time has been their greatest want, and the fatal accuracy of the invader their greatest danger. But enough of digression about a small *détour* for the waggon trains. There is no difficulty in crossing on foot, or in leading over a saddle-horse; and I hear that a light-built carriage has even been got over by pushing it separately on to the ice, and leading the horses after it one by one. With their usual energy and method, the Germans have marked out a good track upon the river, have laid down planks and straw at the landing points, and put men to watch the state of the ice under the pressure which it now sustains.

I hear from those who have been upon the line of communication with Germany, at Strasburg, at Nancy, and at Châons, that signs of the active reinforcement of the German armies in France are plentiful. The Landwehr is pouring into the conquered country like a winter torrent. Every station is full of German uniforms, every train is crowded with invaders, until political France seems called upon to give up the ghost. The effort is the strongest effort at complete conquest which Germany can be expected to make. It is the final "sprint" of the race, and it will probably outstrip the

best that the French can do. But we see how these obstinate men of the Republic, fighting blindly on, have taxed their powerful enemy to beat them. The mere size and wealth of France has allowed her to call forth resources which her military position since Sedan seemed to paralyze. We can now see what a tough job it would have been to get to Paris, and to besiege it, had a system of French Landwehr existed. Under every disadvantage of political change and military failure, the French have struggled into a fourth month of Republicanism, and struggled very nearly through it to a fifth month, despite fresh defeats without number. If the Garde Mobile were a force with some years of previous exercise, and the Francs-tireurs were men who had already been obliged to serve in the army, there would be a tolerably even chance for victors and vanquished in the next round of the Franco-Prussian fight. We may take warning by the French. Heaven grant that we may never have occasion to try to make up for ruinous losses, as they are trying to make up, by putting our shoulders to the wheel at the eleventh hour! But, if we do, there will be all the difference in the world between having trained people to recruit from and having trusted to throwing away our lives to set things straight, without any particular training. The Germans who throng the railway lines of Northern France are coming out with an excellent knowledge of their business, whilst the raw French levies that struggle and die to turn the tide are learning how to fight by bitter experience.

You would have thought that both sides, French and German, deserved credit for their tact, had you seen the meeting of the foes at M——'s table, in a little town not far from hence. They met, as has been so often the case of late, the French as prisoners the

Germans, if not as their captors, at least as the aiders and abettors of their captors. A German general was quartered in the house with his staff, and M——, the proprietor, entertained at supper the prisoner officers who were passing his way. It was a delicate position, which the host held admirably well. Of course he must be civil to his courteous but uninvited guests. Of course his every sympathy went with the old uniform, and with the sharp metallic accents of his own mother tongue. What a dreary dictionary full of Teutonic French he had been hearing for weeks past! What a quantity of bad news had been so conveyed to him! The General, a grave, formal man, speaking slowly in German, and still more slowly in French, had become aware of the presence of the prisoners. He asked a few questions about them, and signified by his manner that the host was free to be as hospitable as he chose to these men who were down. The two parties did not eat together, but they passed and exchanged bows, and greatest care was taken by the victors to show that they recognized the presence of the vanquished. Each party supped by itself. You would have smiled at the strange differences of opinion which the world contains had you heard them talk of their respective opponents; the French thinking it a hard case of invasion that their country should pay for its past folly, the Germans gravely and sincerely blaming the obstinacy which brought these luckless enemies to wage a hopeless war: each side resolved as to its own right, and each resolved not to be backward in outward courtesy to the other.

The cold weather and the skating will long be remembered at Versailles. There is a distant boom of guns in the frosty air, but the park near the lake is as lively as

though no siege were thought of. Skates are let out by the hour, and so are sledges.

The loss of Avron was the first unequivocal sign to the Parisians that the attack of the enemy was stronger than their own defence. The Special Correspondent at Paris wrote on the 26th of December, the day after the plateau of Avron was evacuated:—

On the 27th of this month, exactly four weeks after the plateau of Avron had been occupied by the French, the Prussians attacked it with their heavy guns, in order to clear it. They spent a great deal of powder on this first day, and produced a very small result, as their shot and shell fell wild. On the second day they resumed their attack with diminished vivacity, but the aim of their projectiles was truer, and although little damage was done, yet it was demonstrated that it would be impossible to hold the plateau in face of the Prussian batteries. That same night, therefore, the guns were all removed—the plateau of Avron was vacated, and, as a consequence, whatever advantages accrued from the two great sorties of the 30th of November and the 21st of December were nullified. It is impossible to deny that the effect of this event on Paris was depressing in the extreme, but it was still more so by reason of the terms in which it was announced officially. We are told in one sentence that the employment of the heavy siege artillery of the Prussians must modify the system of defence. “But,” it is added complacently, “all has been foreseen from the commencement of the siege.” It is certainly a pity that, if everything has been foreseen, General Trochu should throw away his strength in unavailing efforts, and should talk so bravely of attempts which all end in failure. There is a strong under-current

of feeling rising against him just now on account of his indecision and many delays. What he wants is daring. He is a very able, honest man; but Paris wants for its deliverer something more than a man—a hero; if he were godlike, so much the better; but it would probably suffice if he had daring enough. As it is, we may now conclude that he will no more attempt to act on the offensive. From the first, indeed, his plan, of which we have heard so much, was entirely defensive. He did not originally intend to take the offensive. It was enough for him to render Paris impregnable, and in this he has perfectly succeeded. Paris rendered impregnable, and able to resist famine for four or five months—he would wait for the chapter of accidents. Who could tell what might not happen? What victories might not be gained by French armies in the provinces? What relief might not come from foreign intervention? He was driven out of this temporizing policy towards the end of October, partly by popular disgust, partly by the urgency of friends who wished him well. He began to prepare the means of attack, and at last, after interminable delays, he made an attack—he made two great attacks—on the lines of the enemy. Both ended in failure, and I doubt if he will attack again unless he is driven to it by an overwhelming expression of public opinion. He will prefer to resist as he can the attacks of the enemy, and to wait for the chances of relief from General Chanzy. Fabius Cunctator was a great man, and succeeded at last in saving Rome; but his policy is certainly hazardous, and it approaches too nearly to that of a military Micawber to inspire much confidence, especially now, when we have barely five weeks before us. Still, there is no use in despairing. If the Micawber policy is bad, the worst of all policies is that of despair; and whether General Trochu mounts his horse

for renewed attacks, or twirls his thumbs waiting for help which never comes, Paris will endure to the uttermost.

It is right to tell, however, that Paris showed the first signs of unruly behaviour the other day—I mean of such unruly behaviour as proceeds from physical distress, and leads to dangerous riot. The riot of the 31st of October, though in its way sufficiently serious, yet proceeding from mere difference of opinion, was comparatively harmless, and it was quickly subdued, leaving no trace of ill-will behind. Let a riot proceed from intense physical suffering and the sense of wrong, however, and there is no saying what may happen. Such a disturbance we had the other day in the intense cold. But I must say that I sympathized a good deal with the rioters. The people of Paris suffer much, but they suffer cheerfully as long as they know that their hard fate is inevitable, and that the Government is doing all it can for their relief. Indeed, this cheerfulness is very wonderful, considering the mismanagement of the commissariat in nearly every one of the arrondissements of Paris. Suddenly came the intense cold—the people were in fearful misery—there was a panic among the wood merchants—the price of fuel rose immensely. The Government had to announce one cold morning that it had not counted on the cold; that it had made no provision of fuel; but that it would make amends by at once proceeding to cut down the woods of Boulogne and Vincennes, and the trees on the Boulevards. On this announcement the people argued after their own fashion. For them there was no time to be lost, and they knew that it takes a long time to organize a Government scheme. The Government probably could not supply them with wood for a week to come. But in the meantime they were starving. How could they wait for a

week until the Government could leisurely carry out its plans? They would do for themselves the work of the Government. So they went forth in all directions to cut down trees, and to pick up sticks. They made no distinction between public and private property. Here they saw a fine tree, which would blaze beautifully; they sawed it down. There were some tempting palings, where the wood seemed dry and cut to size; they pulled these up, and carried them off. Behold an enclosure, walled round with planks and hoardings, on which flourished many advertisements; what could be better for firewood? The poor starving wretches pulled them to pieces, with a sagacity which, if you sympathize with it, you will call practical; and if you have no pity, you will call criminal. Property, no doubt, has its rights; but these are very elastic just now in Paris, in so far as they regard the necessities of life. In fact, as regards these necessities, the sole right of property in them belongs to the Government, which has made requisition of everything edible and everything combustible in Paris. If you have money, keep it—it is yours; but if you have a horse that can be eaten, or coals that can be burned, you can no longer keep possession of such valuables. The State will pay you for them, but you must give them up for general distribution. So in Paris we have a restricted communism in full working order; and the poor people, fully appreciating this communism, did not see much harm in seizing upon trees which did not belong to them, and on palings and beautiful trellis-work which they had not paid for, to light themselves fires wherewithal, and to keep themselves from freezing. Of course, the bereft proprietors are indignant at their losses; and political economists and moralists, who recognize no distinction between a state of siege and a state of freedom, are lavish in sermons on the rights of

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By all the rights of logic, the people ought to have died of cold, waiting until, after a week or ten days, the Government could be in a position to dole out fuel to them. Human nature discovers that it is above such logic, as there have been Emperors above grammar. If Paris in the siege had been left to the political economists, I sometimes wonder what would have happened. There was a sect of free-traders who insisted on free-trade—the inexorable law of supply and demand. They could not see that free-trade implies freedom of many kinds. No, they said, free-trade is good under all possible conditions; this system of rations is not right; let every man keep his property, and sell it as he pleases. If he has an ox, and chooses to sell it at the rate of 100 francs a pound—good: he has a right to do so; let him make his profit; that is his reward for laying up a store against the evil day. These theories are all very fine, but they evaporate before the starvation of two millions of people. Certainly Paris could not have held out as it has but for the modified communism to which the Government gave its sanction in seizing upon all eatables and combustibles in order to distribute them in rations.

In the midst of the firing nine people sat down to breakfast in a small house upon the plateau of Avron. There were the commander of the 6th Battalion of Mobiles of the Seine (M. Heintzler), his wife, the adjutant of the battalion, a captain, two lieutenants, an ensign, a chaplain, and a doctor—nearly all of the same battalion. A Prussian shell came smashing upon the table and killed six of the party. The commandant and his wife were wounded. The only one who escaped unhurt was the doctor. Of the eight persons who were killed yesterday, six belonged to this little breakfast party. What an

incident for the future novelist! Nine persons, including a lady, are jesting over their frugal breakfast, which they are determined to enjoy, in spite of the cannon. "There wants but a shell to give us butter," says one of the party. Instantly comes a shell, and blows six of them out of existence, while wounding two more, the commandant and his wife.

The Germans were by no means disposed to stop at their success against Mont Avron. The forts on that side of Paris—Nogent, Rosny, and Noisy—were to be demolished, if the German artillery was equal to the task. Their fire, in fact, soon ceased, after they had been vigorously bombarded, and the telegrams from Versailles showed that the besiegers believed they were effectually silenced. But their brief inactivity was deceptive, and after an interval of repose, the reason of which was much discussed at the German headquarters, their fire awoke in all its original vigour. The bombardment of the forts in the north-east front of Paris began on the 27th of December, and that of the southern forts—Issy, Vanves, Montrouge, with the entrenchments of Villejuif and Pont du Jour—on the 5th of January. The Special Correspondent in Paris wrote on the 1st of January:—

One of the German correspondents of the press, describing how Paris was to be reduced, gives great prominence to what he calls the psychological moment. It was discovered, he said, by the German leaders, that a bombardment could produce but small physical effect, and therefore it was considered best to defer it until the Parisian mind, being shaken by misery, famine, sickness, and despair, it would produce the strongest psychological effect. It would appear that now, in the opinion of the Germans, the psychological moment has come—the moment when it is likely that the mind of the

Parisians must be peculiarly open to impressions from a bombardment which could effect little by main force. At least this might be inferred from the terms in which the Government describes the first cannonade which the enemy has opened on the forts of Paris. But, then, I am nothing but what is called here a *pekin*—that is, a civilian, as distinct from a military man; and to read the military report of the Government, as well as the descriptions in all the newspapers, you would imagine that it is the long-expected bombardment of Paris, which has commenced with a cannonade upon the forts of the east. Suppose the view announced by the Government and all the papers be correct, it follows that, as a bombardment on this side can do no harm whatever to Paris, it can only have a moral effect. But if the enemy have aimed at moral effect, they have been woefully at fault in their calculations. The bombardment, if so it is to be called, has put the Parisians in great good spirits. "It is a sign of disquietude and impatience on the part of the Prussians," they say. "The siege lasts longer than they expected; they are tired of it; they want to finish; it is necessary that they should finish soon; let us wait a little longer, and they will have to raise the siege." So it was when General Moltke sent in word that the Army of the Loire was defeated. He no doubt expected to drive Paris to despair, and to the point of surrender. On the contrary, he raised the courage of Paris, and we now know that, though the French armies in the provinces were defeated, they made a stout resistance, and succumbed under circumstances which give a good hope of better luck for renewed efforts. On Christmas Day the German leaders made another psychological attempt, which, so far from damping the spirits of the Parisians, has set them chuckling with glee. One of the generals sent in a long letter, ostensibly to arrange for the exchange of prisoners,

and particularly to inquire as to the fate of a certain John Müller. But this elaborate epistle, so full of anxiety for the welfare of Mr. John Müller, contained the announcement, introduced with a clumsy emphasis, of the defeat of a French army at Amiens. It is a great pity that a French army should be defeated at Amiens, but it is a consolation to the Parisian that the Germans should be so anxious to let us know of it that they must stumble into so much clumsiness. And now comes the bombardment, so called, which has upon the Parisian mind the best possible psychological effect.

It is a wonderfully happy faculty—this of cheerfulness and sublime conceit. I neither praise it nor blame it, recognizing fully that it is a characteristic not of French alone, but also of human nature. It is a terrible weakness, and it is a tower of strength. The French used to laugh at us in the Napoleonic wars because our regiments never knew when they were beaten, and went on fighting. But they also did justice to our tenacity. “C’est magnifique,” they said, “mais ce n’est pas la guerre.” And we may say to all their cheerfulness and tenacity in the midst of disaster much the same. It is not reasonable—it is mere conceit; but still it is very fine.

Paris, Jan. 3.—The forts on the eastern side of Paris are being bombarded, but as yet with very small result, whether in loss of life or in destruction of stone walls. On the other hand, the army of Paris has been singularly inactive, to the great disgust of the inhabitants, who are willing to endure any amount of privation, provided the generals in command will do their duty, and show signs of life. General Trochu has received a great deal of praise, and he deserves it; but he lacks initiative, and he has to be driven on. He will, however, be compelled to fight, for whether he can succeed

in his attempts or not, it is recognized here that, in the interest of the armies in the provinces, Paris is bound to keep the army of investment fully engaged. Sorties in succession may not end in victory, but they may at least attain this good result—to inflict severe losses on the enemy, and to keep him fixed about Paris.

In the meantime, it must be confessed that Paris is in great suffering. I have no scruple in telling you this, which might seem to give hopes to the enemy of a speedy surrender, because I have no doubt whatever as to the fortitude of the people, who are indeed ready to hold out to the last crust of bread. The patriotism of the Parisians is unflinching. Whatever murmurs we may hear—whatever complaints against the Government—there is no thought of surrender among those who have the best right to complain. Therefore, in all frankness, I give you the death list for the last week, namely, that ending December 31:—Small-pox, 454; scarlatina, 6; measles, 19; typhoid fever, 250; erysipelas, 10; bronchitis, 258; pneumonia, 201; diarrhoea, 98; dysentery, 51; diphtheria, 12; croup, 16; puerperal affections, 8; other causes, 1,897—total, 3,280.

This is a fearful total, and shows an increase of 550 deaths over the lists of the two previous weeks. Small-pox, typhoid fever, bronchitis, and pneumonia are enormously increased in fatal effect. And it ought to be observed that the weekly bills of mortality do not by any means show the total mortality of Paris. The weekly bills never take account of public institutions. There is an arrangement here by means of which the mortality in the public hospitals is registered once a quarter. So it happens that we know nothing of the deaths in the ambulances, and in other public institutions. The weekly bills take account only of deaths in private

houses, and they present a terrible total. What is to be added for the hospitals, ordinary and military, I do not know; but considering that hospital fever is raging, and that the mortality of the surgical cases is enormous, I cannot be far wrong if I put the total mortality of Paris in this last week at 4,000. Consider what this is in a population of 2,005,709, which is the latest reckoning, that is, a reckoning ascertained by our daily rations.

When 4,000 people die in a week out of a population of 2,000,000, this implies, if the same rate of mortality were to continue all the year round, decimation. A district in England is considered tolerably healthy if only 2 per cent. of the population die in a year. A district is very unhealthy if the death-rate mounts up to 5 per cent. The present death-rate of Paris, if it were sustained throughout the year, would give 10 per cent. Or, to put it otherwise, it is considered an excessive mortality in England if death takes 1 in 1,000 persons in a week. Here death takes 2 in 1,000.

In spite of the bad food, it is satisfactory to note that mortality from diseases of the alimentary system is not by any means what one might have expected. The great minister of evil is the extraordinary cold, which is even more remarkable for continuance than for intensity. Of the one-and-thirty days of this last December only nine have shown a temperature above the freezing point. In the fifty years from 1816 to 1866 the average temperature for the month of December has been 3·54 deg. above zero on the Centigrade thermometer, which is something like 38 on the Fahrenheit scale. The average temperature of this last December has been 1·07 deg. below zero on the Centigrade thermometer, which is very nearly two degrees below the freezing point on the Fahrenheit.

Jan. 6.—Of all the privations of the siege none has been more

hard to endure than the want of news. No pigeon has come into Paris since the 19th December, and the news it bore was dated the 14th. We get news, however, notwithstanding. Sometimes a bottle comes down the Seine, but it generally contains information more interesting than important. Interesting! I confess I am interested in the news that Monsieur Prudhomme's eldest child has got the whooping-cough, and that the black sow has had a litter of fifteen. It is interesting to be thus able to take the measure of human events. There is all Paris in a great agony, and wild with expectation over the bottle, and Paris is informed with all solemnity that a poor farmer's sow has farrowed fifteen. We think much of ourselves here—we feel all the agony of the situation; and we find not a thought of our agony in that precious bottle which is all devoted to a record of the travail of a black sow. We have another source of information in the English papers which come in now and then, but it is difficult to get a sight of them, and the news rather oozes out than is fairly published. Finally, we have the German papers which are found on prisoners. General Ducrot said, three days ago, to an officer of the *Eclaireurs de la Seine*, "We want news, go and bag a few prisoners."—"How many do you want, my General?" says Major Poulizac.—"As many as you like," replies Ducrot; "get me some newspapers." Forth go the sportsmen to hunt for newspapers. At four in the morning they surprise one of the outposts of the Prussian army in the neighbourhood of Bourget. The post is held by forty Prussians, but, taken by surprise, ten are killed and six made prisoners. The rest escape, but their baggage is seized, and we have newspapers from Germany and from Versailles up to New Year's Day. So it is that we get supplied with

news—other than of black sows. When we want a newspaper we shoot a man—we shoot ten men dead, we wound others, and take six prisoners.

Thinking of the black sow, and how all-important she and her fifteen sucking pigs must be to the poor French farmer, I went to the Pantheon yesterday, and to the Church of St. Etienne du Mont. The Pantheon is by rights the Church of Sainte-Geneviève, the patron saint of Paris, and all who wish to call upon this saint for succour flock thither, and to the neighbouring Church of St. Etienne du Mont, where she has a chapel. The 3rd of January is devoted in the calendar to Sainte-Geneviève, and on this day accordingly begins her accustomed *neuvaine*—that is, the nine days of prayer addressed to her. To her holy shrine all true believers flock to pray for Paris in this her time of need. The churches are filled with anxious creatures, who are down upon their knees to the blessed saint. "Oh, Sainte-Geneviève of Paris," they pray, "our good patroness, protect us! Sainte-Geneviève of Paris, our salvation and our guardian, have pity upon us! Oh, Sainte-Geneviève of Paris, thou that with thy prayers didst save our city from the hordes of Attila, save us now from the hordes of his descendants!" While the people are still praying, we can hear the noise of a shell bursting close at hand. The bombardment of Paris, or something that looks like bombardment, has commenced. Strange irony! We are on the rack for news from the French provinces, and the only news which a Frenchman takes the trouble to send into us concerns the fertility of his black sow. On the third day of the year the people rush to the special churches of Paris to pray to the patron saint of the city. Does the blessed Geneviève hear? If she does, at least she does not avert the German cannon! for on the fifth

day of the year the shells begin to fall upon the devoted city. The formidable Prussian batteries on the south opened yesterday on the forts of Issy, Vanves, and Montrouge, and, in a degree, also assailed the portion of Paris on the left bank of the Seine. The practical results of the cannonade are small enough; but the attack was very violent, and the roar was terrific. The Prussian shells are of great size—many of them twenty-two inches in length. But their effect is so little in comparison to their power and to their detonation that many people cannot help believing the cannonade to be a mere feint, to mask some other movement—perhaps to conceal the withdrawal of troops from Paris. If, as we gather from the German papers, it was intended to have a psychological effect, the result would certainly not be regarded by the enemy as satisfactory. When the Parisians recovered their first shock of surprise at the bombardment, they regarded it very much as they would an exhibition of fireworks. They gathered to every high place and coign of vantage where they could see the pyrotechnical display, and watched with curious interest for every flash and every explosion. With a difference, however. Whenever a bomb came suspiciously near, they fell flat on their faces with a ludicrous unanimity. The Parisians are wonderfully obedient to rules and recipes. For every situation in life they have a recipe. And as they have been informed that when a shell bursts upon them, the best chance of escape is to fall flat upon their bellies, down they go whenever there appears the slightest symptom of danger. Nothing can be more laughable. You hear, or you fancy that you hear, a whiz in the air. Instantly the Parisians—men and women—pick out the cleanest places and sprawl on the ground. Of course they will learn ere long to be less eager to fall down; but when one first begins to obey a rule, one takes it

in its widest sense and follows it absolutely. When the people are more accustomed to the shells, they will learn to distinguish the cases where the rule is absolutely necessary and where it is superfluous. For the present, they are all obedience within range of the shells, and kiss the earth with an alacrity which will no doubt be most effectively reproduced in the comedies, farces, and burlesques of many years to come.

Perhaps if the Prussians had begun by bombarding the south of Paris, and the forts to the south, people might have been more ready to believe in their serious intention of reducing the city by this means. But they began by expending an enormous weight of shot and shell on the forts of the east at a very long range, where the cannonade was a sheer waste of munitions. It is calculated that from the 27th of December to the 1st of January 25,000 projectiles were hurled upon the forts of the east—Noisy, Rosny, and Nogent. Men who have been present at Sebastopol and at Charleston in the days of the most furious bombardment, declare that never have they seen anything so hot as the attack upon the forts. Yet the whole eight days of attack upon them have produced but 100 wounded and 30 killed, while the effect upon the walls has been almost imperceptible. It could scarcely be otherwise, considering the distance of the Prussian batteries on that side. They are established at Raincy, Gagny, and Noisy-le-Grand. The batteries at Raincy, the most powerful of any, are 4,100 mètres from the fort of Rosny, 5,300 from that of Noisy, 6,000 from that of Nogent. The other batteries are still more distant. At these ranges the most powerful projectiles have but a feeble effect on the works; and there is such a lapse of time between the flash of the gun and the arrival of its missile, that men have plenty of time to get under cover. On the whole, the cannonade—much

mooted and long expected—has hitherto turned out a failure. The noise is tremendous, and the expenditure must be enormous, but the results are as good an illustration as one could find of the old story of the mountain and the mouse. M. Bismarck, in one of his circulars, talks of the waste of munitions of the forts of Paris in their continual firing. People here could not understand it, and would not believe it. They may understand it and believe it now, seeing how comparatively ineffective has been the prodigious cannonade opened on the south of Paris—ineffective, I mean, of course, upon the forts, for Paris itself has not yet been seriously bombarded. Perhaps fifty shells have burst upon the left bank of the Seine, some breaking as far as the garden of the Luxembourg. But probably a number of these were mere trial shots, others may have been the result of mistake, and a very few may have been sent by way of warning. Paris is warned, but still Paris will not give in, and its only fear is that General Trochu—since he can do so little—may contemplate a surrender. The General has to proclaim, as he does to-night on all the walls, that the people must not be misled by the demagogues who denounce him as a traitor, for he will not capitulate. "The Governor of Paris will not capitulate:" these are his words. But the Parisian, who is one of the most suspicious creatures in the world, asks—"Why does he say that the Governor will not capitulate? Why not say that Paris will not capitulate? Does he mean that he personally will not sign a surrender, but will leave that duty to others?" Of course this is hypercriticism, but it shows the anxiety of the people to resist to the uttermost. They will resist far longer than any one could have supposed. When I last wrote to you on this subject, I stated that Paris could hold out certainly to the 1st of February, and probably for a longer period.

But I think I may now say with tolerable certainty that Paris is good for the 1st of March. It is beyond all expectation, and I confess I am surprised—but it is no more than members of the Government have again and again predicted in my hearing for many weeks past. I acknowledge to have had my doubts. I thought they were too sanguine, and I have been anxious to understate the truth. But now, what do I find? It is the 6th of January—that is, exactly a fortnight from the farthest day, the 20th of January, to which the croakers assert, with a dogmatism which shuts up all discussion, that the endurance of Paris can extend. I go to men who ought to be the best informed in Paris. I cannot mention names—but they ought to know. I say to them, “How long? I am told that the 20th of January is your last day: you must surrender. Tell me truly.” The reply is, “I tell you truly, we can stand out till March.”—“And there is no chance of a capitulation in the present month?”—“Not the least in the world from famine. We are badly off, but we can endure. Who is it that gives you the 20th of January as the last day?”—“I cannot tell you; but I do not mind telling you this—that those who put your last day at the 20th of January declare that if you can hold out till March, the Prussians will be knocked up as high as a kite.” He replied, “It is perfectly certain that we can hold out till March. I have always told you so. We can go well into March. But say the 1st of March; it is enough.” The news seems almost too good to be true; but I will state to you privately my authority, and you can judge for yourself as to its credibility.

In conclusion, let me mention that the thaw has commenced. To-day has been a lovely winter's day—almost warm. The poor wounded soldiers hobble out on crutches from the ambulances to take a breath of fresh

air, and, watching the play of the shells bursting upon Paris and upon the forts, I was able to sit for an hour upon a bench, oblivious of the season, which has been deadly cold.

Jan. 8.—A pigeon has come into Paris to-night with a number of despatches. These despatches bear the mark 43, and as those which last reached us bore the number 36, it is evident that six intermediate despatches are missing. We shall not know the news till to-morrow, but I am told it is excellent.

The bombardment still goes on, but with an effect—moral and physical—so small that any description of it would sound almost like bravado. That there have been deaths, and that there has been destruction, it is impossible to deny: and death and destruction are always terrible to witness. But for the object which the Prussians have in view, the prodigious cannonade with which Paris has been visited might as well have been a salvo of champagne bottles. The only practical result of the bombardment which I can find is one jest the more for the little boys of Paris. When they see a man or a woman particularly well dressed—say a man glorious in furs, that argue an extraordinary care of his person, they cry out, “Flat, flat! a shell—a shell—*à plat ventre!* Down on your faces.” The man, gorgeous in fur, falls flat on the ground—perhaps in the gutter—and the Parisian urchin rejoices with exceeding great joy. The effect of the fire even on the fort of Vanves, which has had to bear the chief assault, has been insignificant as yet. In Paris, on the south bank of the Seine, we can draw a line like that which we see in maps of physical geography, where we are told that here is the line which limits the cultivation of the vine, and here the line beyond which is not heard the song of the nightingale. It is the extreme line to which the Prussian shells have

carried. They have burst upon the gardens of the Luxemburg, upon the Invalides, upon the Observatory, upon the boulevard and street which take their name from the hottest of all hot places—the Boulevard d'Enfer. But most of all they seem to converge upon the Pantheon, for it appears that the Prussians have an idea that here is a powder magazine. There is not a grain of powder in the Pantheon—only hundreds of women and scores of men praying to Sainte-Geneviève to save Paris—though the blessed virgin of Nanterre seems to hear them not. This quarter of the town begins to be deserted, for it is dangerous. A cantinière is in her bed, sound asleep, and dreaming doubtless of her gallant regiment; a shell kills her in her sleep. A dozen people are drinking in a cabaret; a shell comes to scatter them. A mother is sitting at table with her two daughters; a shell smashes into the room, but does them no harm. In a house hard by it bursts on two babies in their cradles; the mother rushes in terror-stricken, and swoons with joy to find that her babes are unhurt. In one of the houses some soldiers are cooking their dinner; a shell comes tumbling into the pot, and the dinner is dissipated, but the soldiers are untouched. In another house a celebrated painter is working at his easel; a shell plunges into his studio, destroys his pictures, but does him no bodily harm. A cab jogs along the streets in the lazy fashion peculiar to French cabs. It contains two ladies, and if the coachman had been a little more active, it need not now be recorded that one was killed and the other only frightened. Frightened! People may well be frightened at such personal experiences; but Paris, nevertheless, is comparatively indifferent, and the psychological moment is not come, nor is it at hand. So much life has been destroyed that a few lives more or less can make no great difference; and so much

property—valuable property—has suffered destruction around Paris that more waste and destruction can produce little effect. We have become seasoned to suffering—hardened; and, like the dyer's hand, subdued to what it works in.

Jan. 10.—At last the news has come, and it turns out to be good. The despatch bears date the 4th January, and brings news of the victory of Faidherbe at Bapaume, on the 3rd. No need to say that Paris rejoices in the good news; but at the same time, perhaps, never before has Paris been seen to take good news so quietly. Paris is not elated. Only a few weeks ago, and news much less encouraging would have sent the capital raving mad, and would have rendered every Frenchman perfectly unbearable. But now much suffering and many changes of fortune have rendered the Parisian comparatively quiet, and if not indifferent, yet undemonstrative. I told you how, in the last days of December, the German generals sent into Paris a very clumsy intimation of the defeat of a portion of Faidherbe's army, which they announced as a defeat of the whole. I see it stated in the German papers that Paris was in consequence very much depressed. But nothing can be farther from the truth. The wish of the German reporters was father to the thought. Paris took the bad news very gently, and was mightily amused at the clumsy eagerness of the German generals to make it known. And now, when good news comes, there is a similar want of excitement. Partly this want of excitement is to be explained by the fact that the Frenchman never loses faith in France. He is perfectly certain that France cannot be conquered. When victory will come to his country he is not now so sure as he was; but that victory is certain he never for a moment doubts. When, therefore, he hears of Faidherbe's success in the north, and of other successes in

the south and the west, he is not much excited, because it may be that victory is not so near at hand as he used to suppose. He has been many times disappointed ; but that victory is coming is to him as certain as that to-morrow the sun will rise, and he begins to think that perhaps he need not be more excited about victory than he would be about the rising of the sun.

But the Parisian is an inquisitive, curious animal, and he puzzles over the date of the fight with Faïdherbe. The battle of Bapaume was fought on the 3rd of January, and the bombardment of Paris commenced on the 5th. The Parisian puts these two dates together, and finds in the one a cause of the other. It is impossible for us to say here whether or not he is mistaken—but certainly the bombardment of Paris at this time of day looks very like precipitation. If the German leaders abstained so long from bombarding the city, why can they not abstain to the end? What possible result beyond wanton destruction can the bombardment now produce? Every man who has been killed by a shell must have cost the Prussians more than his weight in gold—considering the number of shells they have fired—and it is not worth their while to carry on such a game. For moral effect it is nought. Punch goes his round in the threatened streets the same as ever, and the little children gather round him to see his enormities, and to laugh at his unearthly voice. Is Punch changed? Yes, I am afraid he is in one respect changed. Toby is no more ; Toby has been eaten. In some establishments Punch has a cat instead of a dog ; and, sad to tell, the cat also has disappeared. The cat has either been promoted to rabbit, and has been consumed in a savoury stew ; or it has soared into the altitudes of fowl, and has been presented to mankind as *galantine de volaille*. Punch, wanting his dog and his cat, is certainly changed, but he is not changed through

fear of shot and shell. Give my compliments to Mr. Punch in Fleet Street, and tell him that his namesake in Paris has had the misfortune to have lost his dog Toby—in plain English, he has eaten him ; but he goes about unmindful of the Prussian shells with a courage which is worthy of the family. If Mr. Shirley Brooks or Mr. Tenniel, to whom all Englishmen in Paris send greeting, wish to give a true picture of our besieged city, let them depict Monsieur Punch, in the rig of a Frenchman, going the round of the streets and exhibiting the exploits of the most famous of men, regardless of bomb and shell.

There is another point of view, however, from which the news is interesting to many Parisians, and I dare say that, though you are not Catholics, you can to a large extent sympathize with a genuine religious feeling. Faidherbe's victory was won on the 3rd of January. Now that is the feast day of Sainte-Geneviève of Paris—the day when her *neuvaines*, or nine days' worship, commenced. I am no Catholic, but I confess to be intensely interested in every form of religious belief ; and I go nearly every day just now to the Church of St. Etienne du Mont, behind the Pantheon, to see the people kneeling at the shrine of Geneviève, and praying for Paris. It is a wonderful sight—with, however, a great drawback. The church is surrounded with beggars. Such a crowd of beggars I will be bound you never saw in your life. It is very difficult to know what to do with them, and very painful too ; for it is assumed by the crowd that if you have alms for a few, you have alms for all, and the more you give, the more you are expected to give. It is a dreadful persecution that tears one to pieces, for the suffering among the poor creatures is palpable. You go into the church, and you see lighted with candles the shrine of the virgin Geneviève, who has usurped the Church of St. Stephen of the

Mount. What an illumination it is! and the poor devotees come with their prayers and their offerings to the shrine of the virgin who protects Paris and all the villages around. The villages around are eager to inscribe their names on banners around her altar. The worshippers bend low and chant the litanies. What is very curious about these prayers is this, that they began on the day of Faidherbe's victory, the 3rd of January. The sceptics scoffed when the nine days' prayer commenced, because two days afterwards came the bombardment; now the religious have their triumph. They say, "Behold! while we prayed, Faidherbe had his triumph in the North."

Only one thing more of importance, viz., that the death-rate in Paris is on the increase. I give you the list. What is to be added for the hospitals and ambulances I do not know, but at random suspect that a fifth should be added.

	Week from 18th to 24th Dec.		Week from 25th to 31st Dec.		Week from 1st to 6th Jan.
Small-pox	388	...	454	...	329
Scarlet fever.....	11	...	5	...	13
Measles	19	...	19	...	31
Typhoid fever	221	...	250	...	251
Erysipelas	14	...	10	...	9
Bronchitis.....	172	...	258	...	343
Pneumonia	147	...	201	...	262
Diarrhoea	73	...	98	...	151
Dysentery	30	...	55	...	52
Cholera	3	...	0	...	3
Diphtheria.....	6	...	13	...	19
Croup	11	...	16	...	20
Puerperal affections	6	...	8	...	11
Other causes.....	1627	...	1897	...	2186
Total of deaths.....	2728		3280		3680

Jan. 11.—The pigeon which arrived on Sunday brought in an immense mass of matter, which requires answer, and it has taken nearly two days to decipher all its messages. It brought in despatches for the Government, which, when printed, filled three or four columns of the newspapers; and, in addition, it has been the bearer of no less than 15,000 messages for private individuals. All this vast array of news has been reduced to microscopic size, and conveyed in a very small quill delicately attached to one of the bird's feathers. If the Parisians were capable of worshipping anything, they would henceforth worship the pigeon, and vow that never more should a dove be eaten in France, unless in imitation of those unholy nations who eat their gods. Certainly never has a pigeon entered into a town bringing glad tidings to more people than the one which arrived on Sunday. If Paris needed to be comforted, in consequence of the psychological effects of the bombardment, the bird of good omen brought news which would far more than compensate for any depression produced by the Prussian shells.

The shelling of the forts is a very farce. An officer of the *Francs-tireurs*, who appears to have had nothing else to do, took the trouble to count the shells at Courneuve on Sunday last. He counted 2,081. The result was not a man killed and not a man wounded. There is a tradition in the British army that, in the old days of Brown Bess, to kill one man took a man's weight in lead expended in shot. Weigh these 2,081 shells, and think of the waste of strength ending in no result whatever. It is not, indeed, to be supposed that the result is nothing on all sides. The shells falling on the south side of Paris have produced a number of wounds, and not a few deaths. Six children, the night before last, were killed in their little beds. And the wounded in the Hospital of Val de Grâce, and in other hospitals, have suffered a good deal.

But what is the real effect of such wanton destruction? Does it make Paris more accessible to the enemy? Does it make the population quail? It would be impossible for any people in the world to take the bombardment of their chief city more coolly. They look on as at a spectacle provided for their entertainment, and they pick up the exploded shells to stow them away in their cabinets of curiosities. I went again yesterday to the Church of St. Etienne du Mont—that is, by rights, the Church of Sainte-Geneviève of Paris, which is full of devotees praying to the patron saint of Paris for salvation. The prayers began on the 3rd of the present month, and will continue till the 12th. There was a grand illumination of candles; the worshippers were on their knees in earnest supplication—"Holy Sainte-Geneviève, pray for us!" Suddenly a shell burst upon the church with a tremendous detonation. I could not help giving a start; but the worshippers seemed to be unmoved, and the chanting of the litany to the Lady Geneviève, who had saved Paris in days of yore from the hosts of Attila, went on with imperturbable smoothness. The only strong feeling which the bombardment excites is indignation. What possible good can it do? If the King of Prussia and his Ministers imagine that the deaths of a few women in the streets and children in their beds will make the Parisians shake in their shoes, they have made a superlative mistake. They only embitter the war which has been made bitter enough already by the high-handed exactions of the conqueror. Certainly the King who affects to represent the most enlightened, the most highly-educated people in the world, assumes a tremendous responsibility in the face of civilization and before the tribunal of history, when he ventures on such a purposeless bombardment. I am not exaggerating when I say that it is the most violent, and at the same time the most

stupid and unjustifiable, bombardment ever yet attempted.

I am willing to allow of any excuse for it that will show the slightest good which it can do to the German side. We are told that all war is wanton waste; but there never, probably, was such wanton waste as the bombardment which is now proceeding with all the fury of hell let loose. It is such a waste of ammunition that people here argue that the Germans are preparing to leave Paris, and have collected such stores of shot and shell, which can never be carried back to Germany, that they think it best to try the chances of dropping some of them upon the detestable city which they uncharitably call Gomorrah, as a souvenir of their affection. And it is such a wanton destruction of the most precious monuments of Paris—not to speak of human lives—that M. Jules Favre has deemed it right to address a protest to all the diplomatic agents of the French Government abroad, which will, no doubt, be written with all his eloquence. But it needs no eloquence beyond that of facts to prove to every Court in Europe the barbarity of such a bombardment as we are now undergoing. The Prussian shells are falling in the gardens of the Cluny Museum. It may be that hereafter these shells may figure on the tables of the Museum for centuries as a witness to the vanity of human wishes, as well as to the barbarity of the present bombardment.

No courier from London to-day. The American Minister generally receives his bag of letters every Tuesday morning. He is allowed to send a *parlementaire* to the bridge at Sèvres with his despatches for London, and at the same time he receives his letters from abroad. But to-day Mr. Washburne was informed that, "for military reasons," the usual messenger with the white flag could not be allowed to go to the bridge at Sèvres; and so he has neither received any letters nor sent any out. What

the military reasons are which forbid the passage of a courier between the lines, I cannot pretend to guess, but the stoppage of the courier is a grief to not a few of us; because, although the American Minister is strictly faithful to an engagement which he made with Count Bismarck not to publish the news which he receives from London, he sometimes feels himself at liberty to give his English and American friends private news of their families outside. There were advices for some of us in the advertisements of the *Times*. The latest English paper which has reached here is dated the 23rd of December. But we have German papers to the 3rd and 4th of January. I think I told you in a previous letter how they are obtained. Whenever news is wanted, the order is given to go out and bag a few prisoners. A band go forth—a tidy hunting party—who bag from ten to twenty prisoners; and so we get news.

I told you the other day that a bottle came down the Seine bringing us the unimportant intelligence that a certain farmer's black sow had farrowed fifteen. Another bottle has come down the Marne announcing the death of Prince Frederick Charles; but I doubt if anybody believes the story.

Jan. 15.—The spy fever has begun to rage again with a very vigorous flame. Partly this is due to real discoveries, but partly also to the natural anxieties of a people who are coming to the end of their resources; who find that they can do nothing but wait; and who are troubled—overtroubled—lest the defence of Paris should be endangered by the slightest neglect. As in eating their black bread just now the Parisians carefully gather up the crumbs so that not a fragment may be lost; as the entrails of fowls have become a precious commodity in the markets; as the bones of horses are boiled

down for soup and for a gelatinous dainty which is called osseins; and as a number of journals here, with the most awful gravity, refuse to state where the shells of the Prussians have fallen on their city, but tell mysteriously of the disasters which have happened to houses in Street M—— and Street N——; so, more than ever, the people are on their guard against treason, and are disposed to find a spy in every lounge. Add to this, that they are every day more and more impressed with the ingenuity of their German foe; the skill of all his arrangements; the fertility and novelty of his resources. The French hate the Germans with a terrible hatred; they are exasperated beyond measure at the manner in which the Germans have conducted the war in France; but being themselves an ingenious people, they are mightily struck with the ingenuities of the enemy. Thus, there is a Prussian battery at Breteuil, which for a time received the fire of Mont Valérien without any apparent effect, much to the astonishment of the gunners in the fort. They were extremely puzzled, and sought the point of attack with double care. Then they discovered the cause of their failure. It seems that the Prussians flashed powder at some distance from the embrasures of their battery, and thus contrived to misdirect for some time the heavy fire of Mont Valérien. Then there is another contrivance of the Prussians which has taken the fancy of the French. It is that their sentinels wear white cloaks when they stand against walls, green ones when they appear in the fields, brown ones for the woods, and grey ones for the mist. “Tiens, tiens!” says the Parisian, with an appearance of disdain, in which there is an undertone of admiration; “their tricks are without number.”—“But,” says another, “I will tell you one of their tricks which deserves praise, and from which we might learn a lesson. They go

about their work very quietly; we make too much noise with our clarions and drums—we warn the enemy of our movements a mile off. How much better is their low whistle! Their people hear it well enough, and we do not hear it at all.”—“But, talking of whistles,” the conversation goes on, “have you heard of that other dodge? The other night they managed a reconnaissance in the woods of Clamart by means of hootings like so many owls. Our fellows heard the hooting, and could not make out what it was at first. They have got a little instrument to hoot with.” Then says another, “Quite as good as the owl is the dog trick. The outposts at Creteil have a dog who watches for them, and barks when any one approaches.” Hear one more story of a window. “Our people saw a man’s head there, evidently the man on guard. It was daring too much, and they peppered him with their Chassepôts. But every time a shot took effect, and we began to crow for triumph, back came another sentinel, showing himself at the window, as brave as ever. We killed him off; he was replaced by a third. Him also we killed; and a fourth, and a fifth, and a sixth. I assure you we admired the pluck of these fellows coming to the window like that, one after another, to be shot. At last we found that it was only a lay figure. Rather clever, wasn’t it?”

Cleverest of all, however, is the spy system, which has been conducted with as much boldness as ability. The Prussians have a knowledge of the French language, which enables them to carry out their espionage with an ease which is utterly beyond the possibilities of a Frenchman, who rarely knows any language but his own. A Prussian officer has been known to come into Paris and dine like any Frenchman in the *Café Riche*. In the earlier weeks of the siege the Frenchwomen of gay life paid many and many a visit to the Prussian lines. Then many spies got to and fro between the lines on pretence

of gathering vegetables in the fields around. Some poor people drove a thriving business by carrying out newspapers, for which they were often paid in gold. The Prussians were in this way kept well informed of all that was being done in Paris, and there are cases in which the officer on guard at an advanced post knew the watchword of the French lines when it had been unknown to a French soldier, or forgotten by him. Somehow or the other they knew perfectly well when the two great sorties, one upon Champigny, the other upon Bourget, were intended. The Prussian spies have been found with the pass of General Trochu all regularly filled up. The other day, at Asnières, the Mobs got suddenly into a forsaken cottage, where they found four Germans in the act of changing their costume—two were being attired as peasants in blue blouses, a third as a Mobile, and the fourth as an honest Alsatian coming to Paris to seek his fortune. So, a few days ago, on the banks of the Marne, a whole family was seized. There was a little villa near Nogent, occupied by a middle-aged gentleman of distinguished manners. His house continued to be occupied when those around were abandoned. It was watched. Suspicion had been excited, the more as the owner had a German name. One night a light was seen moving at one of the windows—now in one direction, now in another, now suddenly concealed, then again exposed, then describing a curve, then stationary. Similar signs, as if in response, were observed from the other side of the Marne. There seemed to be no doubt as to a system of telegraphy. The occupants of the house were arrested and carried off to Vincennes. But the most curious discovery of all appears to have been that of Sergeant Hoff. He went out almost every night in October and November, declared that he had shot a Prussian—sometimes two or three—and brought back their helmets as trophies. He became a mighty hero

in Paris. We used every day to hear of some daring exploit achieved by the marvellous Sergeant Hoff. Sometimes he went forth in one direction, sometimes in another. But always he brought back a trophy, and a strange story of daring enterprise. The papers would say, "This is now the thirty-seventh Prussian killed by the adventurous Sergeant Hoff." Before we had ceased talking of the dead we would read—"Sergeant Hoff has killed two more." Rewards were showered upon him, and people stood open-mouthed to hear the stories of the brave man. At the battle of Champigny he disappeared. Great were the lamentations over his disappearance. Poor Sergeant Hoff—how sad to think of such a man losing his life! It is now declared with the utmost assurance that he was a Prussian spy. It seems to be proved that he was a German, and his mistress, a Frenchwoman, whom he has left behind him in Paris, has let out certain facts which seem to carry guilt home to him. This is rather ungrateful of her, as he left with her all the money which he heaped together as the result of his heroism, amounting to 7,000*l.* or 8,000*l.* Many people take the fact of his having acquired such funds as the most decided proof of his guilt; but in point of fact it proves nothing either way. The money might have been given to him as the wages of his "espionage," and it might have been obtained as booty from the men he slew in fight. I do not know all the facts; I am loth to condemn an absent man; and who has not learned to be very doubtful of the worth of these eternal accusations of spying? One of the officers under whom Hoff served says:—"It is improbable that he was a spy—it is impossible—it is absurd. He never went out alone; he and his men were commanded by me, or one of my comrades, and he slew his Prussians under our eyes." In spite of this statement, his accusers persist in their charge. They declare that Hoff's real

name was Hentzel, and that his real rank was that of lieutenant in a Bavarian regiment of Chasseurs. A detachment of free-shooters of the Seine declare that they could not mistake him, and that they took him a few days ago at Bezons, recognized him, and shot him. It is now also remembered that he had a peculiar fashion of going on his expeditions. He went forth with companions, but he seldom returned with any—they were nearly always shot. Those who returned alive from the advanced positions assailed by Sergeant Hoff declare that he always did his business alone. He made them hold a particular ground, while he himself refused all companionship on what seemed to be the more perilous part of his adventure. He went forward single-handed; after a time a shot would be heard, or shots; and then he brought back his usual booty—most conspicuous of all being the helmet. Now and then he was known to fire shots under the eyes of his companions, but always without effect.

Paris, then, is full again of this spy fever, and of stories about spies; but it cannot be necessary to say that most of the accusations which we hear are utterly false. The chief attack this week was directed against General Schmitz, the chief of the staff, and against some lady of his family. No names were mentioned, but all Paris understood at whom the insinuations in the newspapers were levelled. General Trochu thought the scandal of such importance as to deserve at his hands an indignant denial.

The bombardment continues. Sometimes it relaxes in fury, and then it resumes the attack with all the old violence—chiefly in the night. The people endure it with a fortitude which is worthy of all praise. The inhabitants of the left bank of the Seine are now crowding to the right bank, and all are lending themselves cheerfully to help these Southerners out of their diffi-

culty. The charity of Paris is boundless. I had no idea till this winter what a kind-hearted people these French are. We have an idea in England that they are frivolous and heartless, and that their kindly manners do not reach below the surface. You should see their self-sacrifice—their almsgiving—their good-heartedness—their boundless liberality. The misery of the poor is very great; but it brings out all the finer qualities of French nature, showing how those who have nothing can endure with heroism, and how those who have to spare will give what they have most generously. Whatever be the result of the siege—whether Paris be saved or captured—she will come out of the fiery furnace ennobled and purified with a sense of greatness which even defeat cannot destroy, and with a possession of human feeling which will assure to her, and regain for her, what under the sway of Napoleon she had nearly lost—the empire of the heart. It is, perhaps, difficult, in the moment when she is dōwn-trodden, and the victorious enemy at her gates points to her the finger of scorn, and assumes to be the scourge of God, to imagine such victory growing out of defeat; but it is not the first time in the history of the world that the weak has confounded the strong, and that out of death and decay have sprung life, resurrection, and victory.

Of course, however, Paris hopes to be saved, and is doing the best she can to win. That best for the moment consists in making all ready for a great attack, if peradventure the armies of the provinces should come to our relief, and in husbanding our resources to the last degree. Nobody in Paris doubts that salvation will come if we can only wait—or at least nobody doubts it who is not a foreigner. The greatest efforts are accordingly being made to economize the food, and to apportion it so that it may last as long as possible. Hitherto we have had unli-

mitted quantities of bread, but now I hear that it is to be rationed. The bread is not very agreeable—it is black; but I suppose it is wholesome, and I dare say it will last longer than the enemy imagines. The horses, too, are being very carefully told out—and one hears many sighs as the time comes for killing a favourite animal. Most persons in good position have tried to save their horses in various ways—some by lending them to the ambulances, others by registering them as connected otherwise with the army or the public service. In this way most of the ambulances have had more than three times as many horses as they actually required. Then foreigners set up a claim to have their horses respected. But war is war, and hunger is a terrible tyrant. The horses are being seized with ruthless hand, and a decree has just been launched that all must be given up with the exception of 2,000, which are to be reserved for the necessities of traction. These 2,000 horses are distributed among the different mayoralities on the calculation of one to 1,000 inhabitants. If an arrondissement has 100,000 inhabitants, it will be allowed 100 horses at the disposal of the mayor, who will let them out as he sees fit for such service as may be necessary. In like manner the cows are to be killed, with the exception of 3,000, which are reserved to supply milk for children and invalids. The mortality among children has been very severe, and much of it is said to be due to the want of milk. The 3,000 cows are accordingly reserved for them, and are apportioned among the different districts of Paris according to population. You will see from this—and there is no use in concealing it—that we are pinched very hard, but still the end is not by any means so near as the enemy imagines. What I am most afraid of is the end of all. Paris will hold out to the last extremity. She believes in her armies of

succour; and whatever may be your own views on the subject, I ask you, for the sake of argument, to assume that succour comes—that Paris is delivered—but after a considerable delay. It is expected here most assuredly that the armies of the provinces will save Paris, but it is not expected that they will save her in a day. They will have to fight hard; deliverance may be long delayed; it may make all the difference in the world whether Paris can or cannot hold out one day more. Let us suppose that she holds out that one day, and still another day, and that then deliverance comes. The joy may be great indeed, but it will not feed 2,000,000 starving wretches. It will take at least a week, under favourable conditions, to get a day's provisions into the town—it may take a fortnight; and we require 2,000 tons a day of one kind or another. How are we to get these 2,000 tons a day? Imagine the distress, the sickness, the mortality, the famine, and the famine fever, while the provisions are delayed. If Paris can be saved, she will regard such suffering as of small account; it is worth the price. If Paris cannot be saved—if the armies of the provinces are to be beaten—then the best thing to hope for is that these armies may be beaten quickly.

To keep our spirits up some of us have taken to laughing, and it is proposed to establish in Paris a new institution—that of Philanthropophagy; or, the fraternal mastication of man by man. Savages have established the institution of cannibalism. Let us refine upon it, and eat each other, not as enemies, but as brethren. Philanthropophagy is the word. We are to begin with the Ministers. It will be for them a species of canonization.

Le gouvernement provisoire
Pour le bien qu'il nous a forgé
Mérite, *tout entier*, la gloire
D'être philanthropophagié !

Jan. 16.—The people are leaving the left bank of the Seine in great numbers, and those who remain take care to find shelter for the night in the safest nooks. The work of removal, or what is poetically called in Scotland flitting, goes on apace. It is calculated that about 400,000 people have removed, or are on the point of removing, to safe quarters—leaving the left bank to the care of firemen, the guardians of the peace, and a few regiments of Guards. Mr. Richard Wallace has added to his renown in Paris by subscribing £4,000 for the relief of those who suffer from the change. He has already won golden opinions here by his benefactions, not only to his own countrymen who are in distress, but also to the poor of Paris. Nearly the whole of the English population of Paris who have suffered from the siege are indebted to him, and to him chiefly, for their means of living; and he has done so much for the Parisians, that they propose to name one of their principal streets or boulevards after him. He certainly makes most generous use of the vast property which he has inherited from Lord Hertford.

Between the 30th of December and the 10th of January no American bag was delivered here because of some misunderstanding as to the usage of the white flag of parley. A Prussian *parlementaire* had on the 23rd of December been fired at by mistake, whereupon Count de Bismarck announced to Mr. Washburne, in a letter dated the 27th, but received on the 30th, that no more parleying with the white flag would be permitted until the offence should be explained, and guarantees given that it would not be repeated. It takes time to make inquiries and to find explanations, and the Chancellor of the Confederation of the North obtained out of the delay an excuse to delay the transmission of the American bag, which he knew contained the invitation to M. Jules Favre.

Let me say a word or two as to the question raised in the excuse itself. Count Bismarck complains that his messenger bearing the white flag was shot at—that several such messengers have been in peril. He quite ignores the fact that the French make similar complaints on their side, and can prove them. General Trochu, in reply to Count Bismarck, sent him proofs of the peril incurred by French officers bearing the white flag. Mistakes will occur; they should be carefully guarded against, and when they occur they should be punished; but they afford no reason why the humane usage of the white flag should be abolished between hostile armies, as Count Bismarck, with a little more irritation than was necessary, seems to insist. War is a very rude business, in which with the best intentions it is not possible at all times to do justice to the graces of life. The French are furious with the Germans for the way in which they have conducted the present war. I could tell you a hundred stories, and no doubt you have heard many complaints. Some of these complaints may be just, but I know from what I have seen that a good number of them are groundless. Thus you will find in the German papers denunciations of the French for firing on the Geneva flag, and, on the other hand, the French are ceaseless in their accusations of the Germans for firing on their ambulances and killing the attendants who wear the red cross. In most cases, however, these recriminations are needless. As for the French, it is true that they are suspicious of the Geneva flag, when they see it in the German lines, for they have found their adversaries full of tricks, and one of these is to shelter their operations under cover of the flag. Of course the chiefs of the army would not sanction such a use of it; but an army is made up of units and companies, and these units and small companies, when

detached, will be found to possess in divers degrees the sentiment of honour. Various detachments have been known to seek for success in unworthy wiles, as for example by holding their muskets butt-end upwards, in sign of surrender, when they had no intention of surrendering, and were only bent on throwing the enemy off their guard; and others have been known to shelter themselves from attack by hoisting the red cross over posts where they wished to make themselves comfortable. I have gone to the Seine at Boulogne, and within two or three hundred yards of the French lines I have seen the red-cross flag hung out of windows at St. Cloud, where it is difficult to imagine that the Germans had any right to place their wounded, and where it was natural to suppose that some officer had his quarters. The French have in this way become a little suspicious of the uses to which the Geneva flag may be turned, and may on occasions have attacked it unjustifiably; but as a rule they have religiously respected it, and would be filled with horror at the thought of having done it an injury.

On the other hand, if the Germans have not always respected the Geneva flag as used by the French, they are not always to blame—the French expect too much from this flag. At the battle of Châtillon, one of the ambulances was within two hundred yards of the cross-fire. What business had it to be in such a position? And how could it expect immunity from the perils of the battle-field? At the battle of Malmaison, the ambulances were, as usual, eager to help the wounded, and to outvie each other in doing good. In this kindly rivalry one of the ambulances, with half a dozen carriages all flying the red-cross flag, got close up behind a French battery that was pouring its shells on the enemy. The officer commanding the artillery turned round with the cry, “Down with your flag! Down

with your flag ! Don't you see we are firing and receiving fire ? If you remain here you must take down your flag." It was the American ambulance, and they took down their flag. They were not prudent, but plucky, and they chose to remain. At Bourget, one of the Christian Brothers received a mortal wound on the field of battle, and a chaplain was in the greatest danger of his life. Let me say, in passing, that the *Frères Chrétiens* have most nobly done their duty. They have never feared to risk their lives ; they have crowded to the battle-field in scores, and may be seen in their black robes and enormous hats performing every kindly office to the wounded. Now, one of the Christian Brothers got shot at Bourget, and the French press made a great noise about it, saying, " What wretches these Germans are ; they might have seen the black robe and the Geneva flag." For my part, I do not believe that the poor Brother was shot intentionally ; but you cannot stop a battle because a Christian Brother chooses to get under fire. With all respect for the motives of the ambulance managers, I think they are bolder than they need be. The ambulances engage a number of persons to go out as volunteers to carry the wounded on stretchers from the battle-field. These men have no notion that they may be led under fire, and undertake the task willingly. On the Bourget day I found my position on the battle-field rather dull, and wanted to get forward ; but I did not know very well how to manage it, as I wore no uniform, and no red cross either on my arm or on my hat. At last came a chance. The mules began to file past laden with wounded men, one on each side. These had been picked up by the military Intendance, but seeing them, the private ambulances thought it was high time for them to go forward. A considerable band of the Christian Brothers went forward carrying stretchers,

two and two. Then followed others in plain clothes. I said nothing, but went forward with them, as if I belonged to them. I left them, however, because they seemed to be going to a part of the ground where the battle had ceased. It turned out that they had scarcely reached that part of the field when the fire broke out upon it anew, and they had to beat a retreat, crawling away on hands and knees. I got hold of another detachment of stretcher-bearers, and went on with them to Drancy. There, behind a wall, we stood watching the artillery duel which was going on close at hand. The French artillery were between Drancy and the Groslay Farm—the Prussian fire came from Port Iblon and Blanc Mesnil. After about an hour the French began to retreat, and in a slant direction right in front of us, so as to place us, where we stood, in the line of fire. Our wall was no protection to us, and I suggested to my ambulance friends that they had better retire. Some scampered off with great alacrity, others went calmly enough; but we had scarcely left the spot when a shell burst upon it. Suppose any of us had been hurt. I know for myself I should have looked very foolish. What possible right could I have to complain, standing there for mere curiosity? And I do not believe that the people of the ambulance had any better right than myself to stand there. They obeyed no orders but their own. They had no instructions; they were simply told to do the best they could; and if they chose to get shot, that was their own look-out. They had no business to go into the battle; and they ought not to complain if they are shot by mistake.

January 16.—Can you conceive anything more monotonous than the beating of carpets? That is what the bombardment comes to in its last analysis. An immense number of men are engaged in beating stone walls

instead of carpets. Their labours are embellished with an imposing display of smoke, of flame, and of deafening sound; but when I attempt to describe the work which is now going on, stript of its din, its glare, and its clouds, I find myself reduced to a pitiful remembrance of one of the most prosaic of all prosaic events—the dreary monotony of hearing men beating carpets, or of a poor labourer by the wayside breaking stones. It is difficult to imagine anything more appalling than the incessant thunder sustained for some forty hours without relaxation; but when one thinks of it in cool blood, one is apt to be a little cynical over human nature making all this pother for nothing. Such sound and fury were never before heard in battle, because never before were so many guns of such tremendous power called into action. It seemed as if the foundations of the world were to be shaken, and as if Titans warred with Titans. And yet all the sound and fury signified nothing, or next to nothing. Certainly the Prussian guns got no advantage over the French which was not amply recompensed by similar advantages gained by the French side. The German successes of yesterday and to-day are reducible to the few persons who were killed and wounded, and to the architectural destruction wrought by the bombs falling on Paris. The Krupp guns have at last managed to get across the Seine, but only at one point. They have got to the Quai Béthune, close to the station of the Lyons Railway. The farthest that a Prussian projectile has yet reached is to the Rue Visconti, close to the Institute; but the shell is not to be found, although several persons bear witness to its arrival. It did not explode, and it probably got buried in a garden. One shell has broken into the dome of the Pantheon; another has smashed into the Ministry of Public Works. The damage produced, however, is won-

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derfully little, if one considers the tremendous waste of powder and shot.

I could not help being profoundly impressed with the present aspect of the war as I walked through Paris this morning very early—between four and five. Paris was as still as a mouse; not a soul in the streets, but the sentinels here and there, muffled up in cloaks and hoods, and shivering by their boxes. The streets were dark, and echoed strangely to my solitary footsteps. All this time there was a furious cannonade outside the walls. As if the roar were a lullaby, the people were all sleeping quietly in the districts through which I passed.

In ordinary times there are not a few people to be seen in the streets at four in the morning, either bent on work or returning from pleasure. But here there are no pleasure parties, or only a few, of what is called "small and early." As for work, there is not much work done in Paris just now which is unconnected with the war. I asked for a book to be bound the other day. It is utterly impossible. All the work done in Paris just now resolves itself into two grand operations, which are intimately related—the making of war and the preparing of food. At four o'clock in the morning, just now, everybody is in bed who is not on guard. Not a cab in the streets. For that matter, there is not a cab to be seen after midnight, and the streets are deserted even by foot passengers. What was I doing out so late at night? At one o'clock this morning there was a death-like stillness in the street, when suddenly there came a loud knocking at the gateway of the hotel where I lodge. The *concierge* is a heavy sleeper; he is a National Guard; he has been on duty for four-and-twenty hours, and he is sleeping with the inertia of a 68-pounder. At last the door is opened; I hear the steps on the stairs; there is a knock at my door, and in walks

with a lantern (we carry lanterns now) a sailor all in blue, with his honest face grinning from ear to ear. He may well smile, for these sailors are welcome everywhere. They are the bravest soldiers in France; fight like devils; and they are petted wherever they go. The sailor comes to inform me that a balloon is to start at five or six o'clock in the morning—suddenly ordered. "But how is this?" I asked. "I was told at the post-office to-day that there would be no balloon."—"It is not a post-office balloon," he replied; "it will carry no letters; it is chartered by the telegraph; the aeronaut will carry your letters in his private bag. I had orders, if I found you in bed, to wake you up and tell you." It boots not to tell you how I entertained the sailor and how I dismissed him. I wrote some letters, and I hope you received that which was destined for you and your readers. Then at half-past four I started forth for the Great Northern Station, to put my letters into the balloon; and thus it was that I traversed Paris in the middle of the night, and found it buried in a nightcap (every Parisian without exception wears a nightcap, with a great tassel at the top), while Krupp was roaring like a legion of lions all round Paris. The telegraph, let me add, was sending off this balloon in reply to the 15,000 despatches which came into Paris yesterday (Sunday) week. That is indeed a curious point. The pigeon arrived on Sunday, January 8, with 15,000 despatches. It took the whole week to enlarge, to decipher, and to distribute them. At the end of the week the telegraph people were ready with a heap of replies; and here was the balloon going off to manage their affairs. A balloon costs £200; so I hope they find profit enough in the transaction.

The report to be given as to the health of Paris is worse

and worse. The deaths in the week ending January 7 were 3,680; those in the week following, 3,982.

I must end with an anecdote—still on the sempiternal question of food. We have killed the porcupine, and are eating him in dainty morsels. A little girl hears her mother say that the butcher Dubois has killed the porcupine, and we are going to eat him. Her notion of the porcupine resolves itself into an accumulation of penholders, such as she sees on papa's writing-table. The *raison d'être* of the porcupine is to produce penholders. When, therefore, the news reaches the ears of the child that the porcupine is killed, and to be eaten, she asks, "But, dear mamma, are we going to eat penholders?" I am sure we have eaten much worse.

Jan. 17.—About twelve days ago, the chief Prussian attack was directed against Vanves, which was reduced to silence more than once by an overwhelming fire, but not in such a manner that it could not recover its voice. The chief attack has now been directed against Issy, which has also been several times silenced and forced to take breath. I observe that the Prussian official reports mention, with a considerable air of triumph, the silencing of this or that fort. But, after all, what is it? These partial and temporary successes look well in a report, but they are for the most part illusory. If a gun is dismounted to-day, it can be remounted to-morrow; and if Issy and Vanves are silenced for a time they soon open fire again, as if nothing had been amiss. To-day the fire seems to have somewhat slackened; but this is more appearance than reality, for much depends on the direction of the wind. If the wind brings the loud roar into Paris, the people look at each other and say, "There it goes. They make noise enough, these Prussians." If it drives the roar away, they say, "At last they begin

to tire, these Prussians. I should think King William has had enough of it." The official reports tell us very little of what is going on ; they have never yet been so vague and meagre. General Trochu has been so much criticised for his tendency to talk and to write, that this time apparently he proposes to act without words.

Jan. 17.—I went at three in the morning of Monday, January 9, to see the balloon Duquesne start from the station of the Orleans Railway. It was a beautiful night, only interrupted by a storm of shells from the Prussian batteries bombarding the south bank of the Seine, but more particularly the hospital of the Salpêtrière, about 200 yards from the station. Let me say, in passing, that few incidents of the bombardment have caused more indignation and disgust in Paris than this shelling on last Monday morning of the Salpêtrière, which is a hospital devoted to 3,000 aged women, and to about 1,000 mad ones. If the shells had been levelled upon the balloon, which was inflated in the Gare d'Orléans, close at hand, they might have done some damage, over which the Prussians would have a right to rejoice ; but what possible good could be got out of shelling the old women in the Salpêtrière ? I enclose a protest against this act of wanton cruelty, and return to the balloon, which was one of the largest launched by the brothers Godard. It was 2,000 cubic mètres in size, and had to carry, besides the usual load of letters, pigeons, and newspapers, a screw apparatus invented by Admiral Labrousse, which was expected to steer the airship, not against the wind, but at a favourable angle. Besides the aeronaut who commands the balloon, three sailors went up with him to work the screw. A considerable crowd assembled in the station to see the balloon go off, conspicuous among whom were M. Dorian, the Minister of Public Works, who has taken the greatest

interest in the experiment; M. Rampont, the indefatigable director of the Post-office, who hopes by means of this steering gear to get return balloons, with bags of letters; and Admiral Labrousse, the inventor of the system. The wind was driving due east, at the rate of four mètres a second; and in obedience to such an impulse, the balloon would naturally go straight into Germany. But it was observed and agreed by all of us, that directly the balloon rose to a sufficient height, and the action of the screw began to take effect, the great monster diverged from the east and leant more to the south. If the screws worked well under the brawny arms of the three sailors who had to manage them, the balloon, instead of going to Germany, ought to have gone into Switzerland. The four men in the basket with the screw were sadly cramped for room; but I trust that they got safe through, and that my letters have reached you.

Perhaps you in London, who get well fed every day, think it very mean of us in Paris to talk so much of our food. But, indeed, nearly every person that I know of talks of it more for amusement than for complaint. The only persons I hear complaining are a few Englishmen, who have no right to be here, unless they are willing to accept the sufferings of the siege. They criticise everything—they are eternally finding fault—they see no good in anything—they have been predicting ever since the siege began that the Prussians would be in Paris in seven days—always seven days—and they are indignant that Paris does not surrender, because they find a deficiency of beef-steak. I blush for my country when I meet them, when I hear their arrogant criticism, and when I see how anxious they are that Paris should cease her heroic struggle and submit to be conquered simply that they may be a little more comfortable. Paris, the

supposed Sybarite, is very good-humoured over the question of food, and is not at all exacting ; but still it naturally talks and thinks a good deal of what it finds rather difficult to get. The discussion in the Academy of Sciences turned upon a subject of great interest to Mrs. John Sprat. You may remember that Jack Sprat, as he was familiarly called, could eat no fat, that Mrs. Sprat could eat no lean, and that so between them they both licked—the rhyme, I regret to observe, says licked—they licked the platter clean. Poor dear Jack Sprat would be in his element just now in Paris, for there is no fat ; his wife would, I fear, long ere now, for the want of her favourite aliment, have added to those weekly bills of mortality whereof lately you have heard enough. The Academy of Sciences took into consideration, at its last sitting, the want of the fatty ingredients of alimentation, and the object of its study was to show how tallow-candles and lamp oil may be rendered palatable as well as nourishing. You see there is no butter, except at thirty francs a pound ; the salad oil is nearly exhausted, and we are reduced for our salads to colza oil and rapeseed oil ; also the animals which are being killed for food are wonderfully lean. The only very fat butcher's meat that I see is dog. It was my fate to eat some mutton broth the other day—that is, dog broth with a dog cutlet in it. The cutlet was very fat, and in passing by a butcher's stall to-day, in the market St. Honoré, I was struck with the beauty of a saddle of mutton. Never after the cattle show in London have I seen a fatter saddle of mutton ; it was a saddle of dog, at three shillings a pound. Yes, people eat their dogs here with touching devotion. It is even said that a little lady here gave up her precious lap-dog, Bijou, to be eaten. Bijou was killed ; Bijou was cooked ; Bijou was eaten. And Bijou's mistress was

observed at dinner to put Bijou's bones aside on her plate mechanically, and was heard to remark, with a sigh, "Oh, how my dear little Bijou would have enjoyed these bones!" But, after all, dog fat, though abundant, is not very tempting, and the wise men of Paris have found it necessary to invent a method of cooking tallow-candles. Of course I am not going to divulge the sacred mysteries of the kitchen; but I advise all those who will do me the honour to read this epistle to go to their clubs, and if they see marrow-bones on the bill of fare, to order the cook to send them up some toast and tallow-candles instead.

The third subject of discussion to which I referred is a painful one—that of the bombardment, than which no deed of war can be, in the case of Paris, more unjustifiable, none more worthy of execration. It is nothing but a wicked, useless act of vengeance, which tarnishes the honour won by the German army. The Academy of Sciences is very indignant that the garden of medical botany has not been spared. It was founded in 1626 by Louis XIII.; it became the Museum of Natural History in 1794. There, say the Academicians, Buffon wrote his immortal work; there Jussieu classified plants according to the natural method, which has since been adopted all over the world; there Cuvier founded the science of comparative anatomy; there Geoffrey St. Hilaire commenced his system of philosophical anatomy. The ground is sacred to all who glory in the triumphs of science. But the Prussian cannon have not spared it; they have shelled it unmercifully. Also in the Jardin des Plantes there was a most precious greenhouse filled with rare tropical plants. It had cost, with its contents, about £25,000, and it has been destroyed by barbaric bombs. Who can wonder that the scientific celebrities of Paris are indignant at such sacrilege?

I went again, the other day, to the Church of Ste.-Geneviève (strictly speaking, St. Etienne du Mont), to see if it had suffered further damage. It had been struck, as yet, by only one shell, on the gable-end facing the Rue Clovis, but the projectile had left such a mark there as I hope the wardens of the church will not attempt to efface. It makes a goodly mark of remembrance on that noble and venerable pile which enshrines the ashes of the two greatest of French thinkers—Descartes and Pascal, whose influence on modern thought is imperishable, and is felt profoundly even by masses who, perhaps, never heard of their names. What must the feelings of any cultivated Frenchman be when he sees this grand monument—charged with, for him, so many sacred memories, and so many beautiful associations connected with the virgin saint of Paris—struck by the rude lightnings of the enemy, which in their passage missed, as by a miracle, the famous Pantheon, raised in honour of all that is greatest and worthiest in France ?

Outside Paris the progress of the bombardment was noted with the keenest interest, and every real or apparent gain was instantly telegraphed to the ends of the world. The Special Correspondent with the Army of the Crown Prince of Saxony wrote from Margency, on the 9th :—

Forts Rosny, Noisy, and Nogent preserve their strange silence, with the blinds down or the shutters up, whichever expression may be preferred. Nevertheless, we are not daring to take liberties with them just yet. Forts Issy and Vanves were silenced yesterday, it was believed definitely, and experimentally during the night some batteries were pushed forward a thousand paces closer to them. Under this aggravation these forts this morning recommenced a feeble fire in reply to a very brisk one. The batteries playing on these forts are at

Mendon, Clamart, and Porte Châtillon. Six batteries in all, as I understand, converge their fire upon Issy, five upon the other fort. The batteries in the Park of St. Cloud face in three directions—one to St. Cloud and Valérien, another to Boulogne and farther, a third to Billancourt and beyond. The batteries at Mendon radiate their fire towards Boulogne, Billancourt, and over the Ile St. Germain, to Pont-du-Jour and Paris. Of the six Clamart batteries four concern themselves solely with Fort Vanves, and two devote their attentions to Fort Issy. In the same connection I may mention that *La Vérité*, of the 7th instant, a copy of which I have seen, states that shells from the Clamart batteries have fallen in the garden of the Luxemburg, where there is a large lazaretto, which has consequently been shifted and brought nearer the heart of the town. It is worthy of note that the garden of the Luxemburg is within the old line of fortifications, not in the space between that and the new *enceinte*, so that the dropping of these shells is virtually bombarding Paris.

There is a strong revolutionary tone in the writings of *La Vérité*. A revolution might be no bad thing. If I read Trochu aright, although something of a potterer, he is a man who has set his teeth hard against capitulation. Were he “dismounted”—to use the expression the Germans are so fond of as regards fort guns—a man must take his place after the hearts of the Parisians, in their present mood. He would go at a sortie like a bull at a gate. The result would be disastrous. Then the army—the real fighting men—who have already been shouting “Peace” as their generals rode past, would shout “Peace” in the ears of Paris, in accents not to be misunderstood, pointed as they would be with a firm determination to endure no more, for the sake of others who will not stand abreast of them in the field, slaughter

in battle, ruthless destruction by bomb-shells, the agonies of cold that kill men as they stand at their posts—in a word, hopeless tortures, dangers, and hardships. When this shout from the throat of the army rings in the ears of Paris, then we may make ready, for the end will be very nigh at hand, and neither impulsive general nor clamorous patriot will postpone it.

There are to-day, at the head-quarters of the 4th Army Corps, three French Garde Mobile officers and some eight or nine soldiers, who came among us in a sufficiently strange manner. A little party sallied out of Gennevilliers last evening, one at its head waving in the moonlight a white handkerchief as a flag of truce. There lay a boat on the bank of the Seine opposite to Argenteuil, into which there got two officers and three men, the men on the farther bank continuing meanwhile to wave the white handkerchief without intermission. These landed, and at once proclaimed themselves deserters, demanding, with serene equanimity, to be made prisoners of. One of the soldiers, the request having been complied with, announced his desire to go back for the others, and this being permitted, he crossed, and then recrossed with the second boat-load. I meant to have gone this afternoon to see the deserter officers, the first of the Mobiles in Paris who have thus lost their honour, with a view to obtain from them some information as regards the condition of Paris, and to send it to you, to be believed in as much as statements made by recreants might deserve. A command, however, that I could not disregard, to be elsewhere this evening, has compelled me to forego the intention.

The Special Correspondent at the King of Prussia's head-quarters wrote, on the 18th of January, from Versailles :—

The severe weather of the present season is a great advantage to the Germans before Paris, inasmuch as it is a great disadvantage to the luckless French garrison. I do not know that any of the besiegers have suffered more from cold than they are accustomed to suffer every winter of their lives at home; whilst it is certain that the scarcity of fuel, and the claims of outpost duty, make the besieged groan over the biting cold. With good village quarters, and plenty of flooring and furniture to burn, the gallant lads from Germany can laugh at ten degrees of frost. They have stout clothing and ample rations, they are buoyed up by constant success, and the rate of mortality among them is less than the average rate in time of peace, when they live quietly in barracks. There are, of course, losses in battle to be set off against the heavier losses of the French, and there is home sickness preying on those who expected to be back again before Christmas time. But, as far as wind and weather are concerned, the besiegers might safely undertake to go through the same trial for three winters to come.

The weather has interfered with the bombardment, not by cold, but by chill driving mists. Since the opening of fire against the southern forts on January 5, we have only had one really clear day, and on the other days there has been more or less thickness of the wintry haze upon the landscape. To the Germans, who aim with care, and trust to their good shooting for success, this has been a most decided drawback. They have had the best of the artillery duel, and have dismounted many French guns, but if the weather had been less hazy they might have effected still greater mischief. It is reported, in the *Moniteur Officiel* of Versailles, that so early as the 5th instant some shells fell into the garden of the Luxembourg, and with a fair chance for their aim, the gunners in the German batteries might have struck the Luxem-

burg Palace itself. I observe a gradual approach to the idea of thorough bombardment among both officers and men of the German army. They have persuaded themselves that the King will consent to strong measures, now that the forts have been fairly tackled. All these stray shots, made at random into the city, are but to prepare the way for a systematic attempt to compel a speedy surrender. So at least say the Germans. King William, they add, has been loth to injure Paris, and had always refused to allow the shelling of the suburbs until his artillery should have engaged the outlying forts. Now, however, that the forts have been engaged, and partially silenced, His Majesty will grant the prayer of his soldiers. In a day or two more, should the French still be obstinate, a shower of incendiary shells of great size will be poured upon them.

In former letters I have spoken of the causes which seemed to me to aid the German artillery in its success against the forts. There is the firing upwards at a line, a vague spadework, with only quick flashes and wreaths of smoke to guide the aim. There is the advantage of the newly-chosen position as against the position long known to all the world. The French guns fire through embrasures, the Prussian are pointed, *en barbette*, over the top of the parapet, and this seems also an advantage to the Prussians. Then there is undeniably the greater effect of the Prussian shells when they burst, and the steady aim of the gunners who use them. It cannot be said that the French "Naval Brigade" has done well in this struggle. The men have doubtless shown activity and pluck; indeed, I hear that two or three of their struggles to get things straight and reopen fire have been worthy the service to which they belong. But their aim has been wretched. Where are the rivals of our crack shots from the *Excellent*? Where are the

men who ought to be able to cut away an enemy's masts and knock off his rudder? The great guns in the forts should have dismounted many more of the German pieces, and should have at least fallen near the batteries at every round. As it was, I saw them bursting, on the 5th of January, all over the fields in rear of the besieging line, and calculated that three went astray for one that was well put home. The only thing that the French artillery seems able to do is to fight blindly on and die for the Republic. With men so obstinate, it would not surprise me to hear that they reopened all their forts again at the most awkward moment. The Prussians are quite awake to this chance, and will be very cautious in advancing on the forts without regular approaches. They admit that, though much knocked about, the French may be also "playing possum," as our Western friends phrase it; and that a fort, though silent, may not be absolutely silenced.

The news from north, and east, and south, is thought satisfactory at head-quarters, though it is not so good as might have been expected. Should Paris really be starving, and should General Trochu have only a month's more resistance in him, there will hardly be time for the provincials to save the capital. Chanzy is checked in one direction, Faiderbe is successfully held at bay in another. Even Bourbaki, the most threatening for the moment, is a long way off, and is, moreover, hampered in his movements by the weather. Let Paris but be reckoned as certain to fall before St. Valentine's Day, and the efforts of these different commanders may be taken to be almost certain to fail. The German grip is tight on the city, and the German troops will die rather than give ground. You can easily understand how bitter it would be to them to do so, and how splendidly they would fight to avert such a result.

From St. Germain-en-Laye a Military Correspondent wrote, on the 16th of January:—

In St. Germain we have a strong and splendid Landwehr regiment of the Guard, with some cavalry and two field batteries, as a *soi-disant* permanent garrison. But frequent migrations of portions of these troops take place; lately, towards Versailles and to the southwards of that station. These Landwehr troops are certainly splendid specimens of the soldier. Ours are Landwehrs of the Grenadier battalions, stalwart, steadfast, stubborn-looking men, averaging from twenty-six to thirty-six years of age, having served for the most part in the '66 campaign, just arrived from home, and all anxious to bear their share in the capture of Paris.

Nothing can exceed the orderly and modest bearing of these troops, in billets and in barracks, at this station. By 8 P.M. they seem to vanish from the streets, and an hour afterwards every Teuton, save the necessary town guard, is in bed. I never fail to see the Landwehrs engaged in one military occupation or another. Every morning, from half-past nine to eleven, the Parterre and Terrace are full of squads of these soldiers, under their respective subaltern officers, and superintended by their captains. Some companies are occupied in the parade of their kits, when I observe that their boots are, as they should be (for serviceable boots for the infantry soldiers are next only in importance to serviceable ammunition), special objects of the most careful inspection. Next in importance come the shirts and greatcoats. The latter, by the way, are excellent, of strong milled cloth, with no admixture of the "shoddy" so lamentably familiar to our service. Each man has a detached hood or capeline, in cloth, with which he can cover the whole of his shako, or helmet, enveloping the ears and back of the head, and

buttoning with two buttons under the chin. These head wrappers have only one objection, in my opinion—that of deadening the sound of approaching “objectionables,” in windy weather, to sentries on outpost duty. Other companies and squads are engaged in drilling. The companies which are strong (125 men per company) go through every sort of manœuvre incidental to a battalion, or, rather, to a company in battalion. I am much struck with the perfect steadiness of the men in the ranks. Such a contrast to the ever-moving, ever-jabbering French infantry! Their strict attention to their instruction is remarkable, which I attribute to the fact that the Prussian officers keep their men but a moderate time at “attention,” allowing them frequently to “stand at ease,” thereby giving the soldier no excuse for carelessness or inattention when required for actual work. In skirmishing, their “aiming drill” is particularly attended to, each skirmisher being carefully watched and corrected, and cautioned to aim deliberately, and not lavish a single cartridge uselessly. This will account for the effective fire of Prussian infantry when in actual contact with the enemy, for they rarely throw away a shot, aiming low and firing deliberately as they cover their object. This also accounts for a fact in the late sortie towards Champigny—that most of the French wounded had been found shot in the lower part of their bodies and legs. The Prussian officers appear to me full of zeal, professional knowledge, and up to their work in every detail. In drilling their companies or battalions, I observed that they never failed to station themselves from sixty to seventy yards in front of their men, and well to windward of them; for nothing renders soldiers more unsteady and nervous in the ranks than over-anxiety or straining on their part to catch the real intention of a faintly-heard word of command. The Prussian officers deliver their

cautionary and executive words of command with that clearness and decision of tone which is indispensable to cause companies or battalions as large as those of the Prussian war establishment to move with confidence, precision, and celerity.

Jan. 11.—The other evening we were enlivened by an *alerte*, which flashed upon us about eight o'clock. The alarm sounded in my street, upon which I immediately sallied forth, watch in hand, on to the Grande Place, to ascertain personally how long it would take the Landwehrs, who were all quietly ensconced in their different billets, to fall in, have their rolls called, and march off to the threatened point, which was about two and a half miles distant on the banks of the Seine, opposite the high-road bridge, now demolished, at Châtou. From the first sound of the bugle until two strong Landwehr companies were formed up in complete marching order, and ready to move off, it took as nearly as possible twenty minutes. There were about 260 men in all. Each soldier had an extra blanket slung under his knapsack, twenty-four hours' cooked provisions in his havresack, alongside of which was his drinking flask—all, in fact, *au grand complet*. I was much struck by the soldier-like and noiseless way in which their falling in was conducted in the dark, and the business-like method of calling the rolls by the under-officers, to ascertain if any were absent, &c. There was not the sound of a voice in the ranks. No absentees were reported; upon which, in solid sections of "fours" from the right flank, away marched these sturdy soldiers, arms sloped with mathematical precision, and keeping their well-measured and uniform cadence of step as carefully as if filing to or from a common drill parade, instead of starting, as they were then, on a matter of life-and-death importance. When clear of

the town their officers ordered them to march at ease. Again, on this occasion, I could not help being struck with the distinct and unmistakable words of command of the officers. In my humble opinion, on all occasions, but on none so especially as on night duties of this nature, is it essential to give clear and distinct words of command, both cautionary and executive; it inspires confidence and exacts the greatest attention from the men. Should any confusion ensue through the darkness or from other causes, I should say the Prussian soldiers would thoroughly understand the system of rallying quietly round their colours, and there patiently "listening" for subsequent orders; for no man should, under such circumstances, ever attempt to open his mouth to "ask" for them.

The expected sortie proved abortive—but, as some very sharp musketry firing still continued after these troops had marched away, I followed them, taking advantage of the presence of an English ambulance waggon which had been ordered out in case its services should be required at the outposts in question. On arriving there we found the Landwehrs all very jollily engaged in smoking their pipes under cover of the houses on the side of the main road, which, although at nearly 2,000 mètres from the French, have been grazed by their "obus" and Chassepôt bullets. The French had some artillery present, with which they fired "obus" into the town of Châtou, and brought a chimney down close to the quarters of General von Loen, who commands the division here, and who had assisted at this unaccountable Gallic spurt ever since its commencement. There were no wounded for our waggon, and we were all back in St. Germain soon after midnight. It seems to me that the ordering out of the Prussian pickets, their method of posting their sentries, their system of

supports and reserves, are very similar to our own regulations. Their outlying picket in general consists of one company per battalion, unless a larger or smaller number is specially ordered. They leave off duty sufficient men to draw provisions and cook, and their camp-kettles, carried on each man's pack, are those used by them in cooking if required. Should the particular company going on picket be too weak, it is made up to the required strength from the rest of the battalion, and this extra picket duty from other companies forms a separate roster. Each man during his picket has the same post as sentry that he is first placed in, and the most intelligent men are selected for sentries at the important stations. I am further informed that an officer is generally appointed to examine all deserters from the enemy, and to compare all their information so as to show collectively all the details thus given. Reports in general terms as to the enemy's movements are not admitted. His supposed force is ordered to be stated in definite numbers, and of what arms that force is composed. In fact, I have every reason to believe that the Prussian system of outpost duty by their infantry, and patrolling by their indefatigable cavalry, ever on the move to keep up the communication from corps to corps, &c., are very nearly perfection.

Some years ago I remember hearing the late Lord Combermere state that at the commencement of the Peninsular War our infantry soldiers knew very little of outpost duties, nor our cavalry of efficient patrolling, until they received the valuable assistance of Colonel Arenschildt, who commanded the 1st German Hussars, only 400 strong. In co-operation with a weak English infantry division of 2,500 men, under General Craufurd, he managed to hold a very extensive tract of country in the face of Marshal Ney's corps, supported by numerous cavalry.

The German Light Cavalry, which I have seen about here, appear to me well mounted on wiry, lasting-looking horses. The men are compactly built, having muscular-looking arms and shoulders, and averaging, I should say, from ten to twelve stone weight. They have a solid seat, less stiff than our own cavalry, and appear to have a lighter hand on their horses. After all the hard work they have been exposed to during the late exceptionally trying weather, their horses are in fair condition, and very few sore backs. Can this latter most essential quality arise from the fact of their not always "bumping the pig-skin" in riding-school fashion, but being permitted to rise in their stirrups? As a rule most Germans are good horsemen, and horse masters. It is curious to notice how many of their infantry soldiers know how to sit and manage any stray horse they may throw their legs across. The Landwehr infantry officers especially, of whom all the captains are mounted, ride well, and very few of them would deserve the well-known sarcastic term of reproach with which the late Sir Hussy Vivian used to crush such cavalry officers as he considered to disgrace that branch of the "service" by inelegant equitation,—"By Gad, sir, you ride for all the world like an *Aidutant* of infantry!"

The Special Correspondent at the head-quarters of the King of Prussia wrote, on the 14th of January:—

In face of the great events which are happening before Paris, it is natural that General Trochu's conduct should be fiercely discussed. He has done much for his country, and may be proud of having kept the Germans in play for about four months; but he has not broken through the besieging lines, and it begins to look as though he never would break through to the end of the chapter.

It is very difficult to judge of his policy until we see the result fully developed. Watching him from outside, as we in Versailles have watched him since September 20, he seems to be a cool, cautious commander, very capable in organizing his forces, and perhaps a trifle slow in using them. He had but a small body of regular troops in the beginning of the siege, and the Mobs, who are now capital soldiers, were then wanting in discipline. Added to this, you must take into account his weakness in field artillery. Days and months of labour were required to bring the field artillery of Paris into an efficient state. Days and months of labour meant so much loss of the precious time during which the food supplies would last. Whilst Trochu was preparing for a great sortie, the Germans awoke to the fact that they must strengthen their positions the better to resist him. In proportion to his readiness to come forth was their readiness to drive him back; and the small sorties which he made in September and October to amuse the people with a show of active work, helped the German commanders to study the debatable ground. They may thus have gained a trifling advantage, but they recognized the difficulties of Trochu's task, and thought that he kept things going on the other side with only too much success. How the faces of the Germans brightened when news came of the riot in the end of October! Here was good news indeed! Trochu arrested by the mob? The Germans wanted nothing better. As they felt sure of winning in the open field, they were anxious for the mob to get the upper hand, and come out for a final effort. Thousands would fall in vain attempts to break the line; and when the remnant fled back to Paris, there would be a panic in the city. So thought the besiegers when the besieged seemed likely to change their tactics. Trochu's very caution puzzled Von Moltke.

by causing delay. The German was eager to fight to any extent; but the Frenchman was not to be tempted into rashness. He may have overdone his cautious policy. Time will show. Certain it is that when he mildly resumed the sway which the October mob had seized, and spared his opponents' lives that there might be no additional bitterness in the party strife of the city, he had every reason to play a waiting game. The Army of the Loire was well nigh ready to march; and we now know that but for the capitulation of Metz, which set free so many Prussian troops, this Army of the Loire would have caused immense trouble to the besiegers of Paris. It is but fair to General Trochu to remember these things. He made his sorties of November and December just in the nick of time for meeting Aurelle de Paladine had the other fought his way northward. Then there was a pause, as was natural after so severe a check as the French had received to the east of Paris; and then, a few days before Christmas, Trochu made another sortie, which suited well, in point of time and direction, with the march of General Faidherbe southward. There has not since been a chance for the Parisians of doing much on the offensive, for the attacks of the German siege guns have been incessant, and the weather has been very bad for taking the field. It would seem, from what has gone before, that Trochu will act cautiously and coolly in his difficult task, prolonging his defence to the last possible moment. We may calculate his prospects as those of a tactician who is slow but sure. He has kept the Germans waiting a long time, and he will keep them waiting yet a little longer, just because he will not risk his all upon a single cast.

The present combination of force and famine is very strong against the city, and the cold weather makes

the lot of the people still harder. They are beginning to taste the horrors of bombardment. We learn by newspapers brought out of Paris that shells have fallen with effect in the inhabited parts, far beyond the ramparts. It remains to be seen whether the National Guard will endure not only danger to themselves, but the destruction of their homes and families. They might shrink from such a test without dishonour, but I do not think that they will. The opinion of earnest and thoughtful Germans will be again at fault in regard to this strange city, and the first effect of a bombardment will be to brace up the French, as a stroke from a riding whip on the face stiffens the resistance of an angry man. Not until the lesson has become really severe, and the first fierce cry of vengeance has been drowned in blood and tears, will the Parisians yield to force. The more formidable foe is famine. This is what the besieging army may count on in any case. Each fresh attack is helped by hunger within the walls, and we can now appreciate the admirable skill with which the two means have been worked up together at the end. Not a point of advantage was lost in the preparations for bombardment, for what mattered a few days more or less when delay would only bring hunger to bear as well as cannon?

There is high hope in the German ranks. The wintry sunshine glitters on the snow, and the gunners can take aim with fatal accuracy. Whilst the besieged suffered cold and hunger, the besiegers are living well, and are keeping themselves thoroughly warm with an abundance of fuel. From day to day they expect to hear that Paris has surrendered. I find it difficult to talk of the immediate future without being set down as half-hearted about the siege; for I am apt to

mention February 1 as a possible limit of time.

It has been a story of such constant delay hitherto that one smiles at the hopeful tone with which "to-morrow" is regarded. To say that the French have food enough for a week more makes the average German look grave, nay almost sad; and to hint at any condition of affairs in Paris short of anarchy produced by terror is evidently thought quite unkind. The German soldier is anxious to see his work honourably finished, and to get back to the dear ones in the Fatherland. The German trader is anxious to reap a rich harvest by spoiling the Egyptians. Both are weary of waiting. Thus it happens that we have a very limited horizon. We cannot allow the prospect to stretch out beyond a little distance ahead, and now that the end is really near we measure our hopes by days instead of weeks.

The Special Correspondent with the Army of the Crown Prince of Saxony wrote, on the 13th of January, from Margency:—

A day of dense fog and equally dense dulness. From the east we hear the lazy thud of a big gun now and then, fired, I suppose, in protest of total inactivity. Sometimes there comes a faint sough from the south, that might be a cartload of stones emptied in Epinay, or might be the attenuated noise of the southern bombardment. I have seen a regimental officer to-day, who left Versailles this morning, and who brings the tattle and gossip of the second "Staffel" of little big men located in the Hôtel des Réservoirs. He says, unofficial or semi-official, Versailles is not at all pleased with the results of the bombardment, so far as it has gone, and especially is disgusted because some 200 shells, said to have been projected into Paris, have not produced the

effect of a capitulation. I venture to interpret his news according to my own lights. I know that what Mr. Merriman calls the "princelets" did not wish for the bombardment at all, and are therefore not indisposed to cry it down. Now that it has commenced, however, there is a not unnatural, although very mistaken, impulse to weigh its effect against the effects of former bombardments by German siege guns. "No fortress has stood our breaching artillery over three days except Strasburg, and that for little longer."—"Avron was swept clean in thirty-six hours."—"We have been pounding away at these eastern forts now ever so long, and for not a few days at the southern, and yet who can see the holes in them that a serene Pumpernickel could walk in at?" The worthy Pumpernickels of the Réservoirs forget what these forts surrounding Paris are. Avron was a thing by itself; the most stupendous blunder that a garrison containing a corporal of engineers ever perpetrated. But Mézières, Phalsburg, Toul, Verdun, Strasburg—all the squad of them, fell either of starvation or because the population of the towns around which the fortifications were built were being burnt and bombarded out. I believe, trusting to memory, that Strasburg is the only town in the fortifications of which were battered practicable breaches. The forts round Paris have no internal population; no houses to be burnt; no children to be blown up as they play in the gutter; no closure of their supplies either of food or ammunition. They have to be battered to bits on their own merits; and you don't batter to bits in a day works built and protected as they are. There seems no reason that, bar assault and bar panic, the bombardment of the Paris forts may not last as long as the food inside Paris. But there is starvation and starvation. There are few communities that would not arrive all

the sooner at the conclusion that starvation pitch has been reached when a bombardment is going on around them, and occasionally into them, than if hunger pinched them in peace? Why does Paris hold out? Scarcely, surely, with the forlornest hope that it can ultimately escape the doom of capitulation; but to deserve well of the country of which it is the capital—to give time, by engaging the attention of so many of the enemy, for the provinces to resuscitate themselves—to earn for itself a name for enduring heroism to last unto all posterity. But Paris must be all but hopeless for itself, and in despair; the strain is so strong that sufferers are very fain to end it if they can decently. And nobody can deny that the defence of Paris, were Paris to capitulate to-morrow, has been one of the grandest episodes of modern warfare.

If it is not likely to be pleasant times for such French officers as have broken their parole when recaptured by the Germans, I think I would rather be in their plight than in that of the French officers who have deserted to the enemy, and who may be given up or retaken. A message was sent to St. Denis to acquaint the French chiefs with the fact of the apprehension of the three deserting officers of whom I have already written. Trochu sent back a grim and curt message:—"I am already acquainted with the disgraceful fact, and it would be a great kindness if you sent the scoundrels back into Paris, or, if there are obstacles to that, if you would yourselves shoot them."

The château of Villantaneuse has been occupied by Francs-tireurs instead of the Christian Linesmen who were in it, and the former lively gentlemen are keeping the foreposts on our front on the alert during the night. There is no more fraternizing now, no more interchange of field flasks or donations of sausage. These Francs-

tireurs "prowl about" as cunningly as if they were in New Bond Street, and take pot-shots at sentries in the most uncivilized manner. In consequence they are not popular on the foreposts.

I am sorry to say drunkenness is on the increase in the German army besieging Paris. In the active campaign preceding the siege you would hardly ever see a man drunk ; now hiccupping gentlemen making a staggering exit from the shop tenanted by a *marketender* are far from uncommon. There is more than cause for this. The men in a siege get inexpressibly *ennuyé*, and somebody has said that the climax of *ennui* is delirium tremens or suicide. Perhaps even a stronger cause is the want of beer, and the consequent necessity, if a man drinks at all, to take glass after glass of rum, schnapps, or arrack. If you give a German plenty of beer, you seldom see him actively drunk. He may be passively muzzy ; but with thirty or forty glasses inside

- him, he will go through his facings so as to satisfy the sharpest sergeant in the service. But spirits double him, unless he be an East Prussian, or a Pole. The former can take a stint about equal, I reckon, to a seasoned Scotch Highlander ; the latter reckon brandy no more than water. I marched, some three months ago, for two days with a company of the 63rd Regiment of Von Tümpling's Army Corps. They were all Poles ; half of them spoke no intelligible German, and the raw spirits that they put out of sight, without so much as winking, struck me with abject amazement. We have little or no beer around Paris. A beer-lover myself, I know all the "sure finds" on the northern and eastern sides. And they do not number half a dozen. Now and then a few stray casks come to what may be called the out-quarters of beer. Yesterday, in this village, I saw, on a *mar-*

ketender's shutter, the label, "Bier!" conspicuously displayed. This was in the morning; in the afternoon the ticket had disappeared; the beer was drunk out, and disappointed men, who had come in from the neighbourhood on the strength of the winged report, were turning away muttering speeches the reverse of soft.

Jan. 14.—That comical major of Mobiles, who, when he was surprised at his dinner after dark in Ville Evrart, grumbled most furiously that such tactics were in violation of civilized warfare, and that there was a tacit understanding that after sundown fighting should cease, expressed, I take it, pretty closely the general opinion on the subject of the defenders of Paris. They have not even elected to take advantage of fogs. Nay, Trochu has referred to fogs as standing in the way of his exertions, although most men would be inclined to think a fog was just the thing he would fervently pray for.

But last night witnessed the double revolution. Last night—to make a bull—the moon did not rise till the morning; last night was as dark as a wolf's mouth, and the fog besides was so thick, that in getting along you had almost to lean against it and press it out of your path. Last night, just after ten, I was quitting the field-post office in Margency, when I heard a sudden burst of heavy and close firing. As I stood listening, report after report came up the valley, that could only proceed from the big throats of the guns of the forts of St. Denis. Then there was a spurt of faint musketry fire, then a louder burst; the din between artillery and musketry gradually becoming continuous. It happened that in the afternoon I had been having a discussion with a staff-officer as to the likelihood of a sortie out of St. Denis, either towards Stains, Pierrefitte, or towards Epinay and Enghien. He took the view that the French, not being rank maniacs, would make no such attempt;

I contended that a sortie in any direction being now an indication of mania, if seriously expected to succeed, there was, to the perception of the besieged, rather less insanity in coming out in this direction than any other. Was this sudden firing, I asked myself, my triumph over my friend of the staff? It looked very like it from where I stood; but Margency is a deceptive place as regards sounds. So I took to the outside of my paragon of cobby screws, and trotted off to Montmorency as fast as I could.

Montmorency was "alarmed," but not turned out. The opinion of those I spoke to there was that Stains and Duguy were the objects of the attack, the noise of which was swelling louder and louder. There was no guide by eyesight. The fog was so dense that one could not have seen a shell burst 100 yards in front of him. Anyhow, whatever was going on was farther east than Montmorency, and the great guns of the St. Denis were in full swing. The way to Stains, if a man has any reasonable desire to get there whole, when the forts are firing, is to go to Arnouville and bend backward again by the road leading through Stains in to Paris. When I got to Arnouville I had, therefore, overshot Stains, and still the noise of the musketry was south, a little east. It was not Dugny; that was too near. Was it possible that it could be that unfortunate Le Bourget again in trouble? A passing orderly from Gonesse gave me the "office" opportunely. It was Le Bourget, and the French out of Drancy had been pitching into it ever since ten o'clock—it was now eleven. He did not know the dimensions of the attack, but judged it to be considerable from the noise it made. Well, I had ears of my own. "Was he carrying the alarm?" "Nay, Gott bewahr!" and he jogged on contentedly. I made the near cut through Dugny, and

got into Le Bourget about half-past eleven o'clock. I cannot say it was a strange scene, for you could see hardly anything; but there was sufficient to engross other senses. Behind walls and in the shelter of the courtyards and their entrances stood the men of the 1st Battalion of the Queen Augusta Regiment, which had just been hurried up from Pont Iblon. They were in reserve, for they were not wanted. Shells were crashing in the already smashed and battered houses, and the rattle of musketry was incessant from the end of the village. I took it for granted that the old bone of contention, the railway station outside the village, and close to the Lille road, was what was being fought for, and cautiously ventured in that direction, intending to go as far as the barricade across the road. In the darkness I ran up against an officer standing out in the open coolly smoking a cigar. The officer was Major von Thummel, commanding the 2nd Battalion of the Queen Elizabeths, which formed the garrison of Le Bourget for the night. But there was no fighting for the railway station, for the unanswerable reason, as the Major explained, that no railway station exists now. It was pounded to splinters in December, and no longer affording any cover, the Guards utterly demolished it, and used the available wood to make their fires where-withal. The Queen Elizabeths thus held the barricades on the roads, three of which diverge near the Paris end of the village, certain loopholed shelter afforded by garden walls and sundry detached houses of great strength, which form a kind of suburb on the Paris side of the little brook Molleret, which passes through the village at right angles to its principal and indeed only street. They were mostly concentrated in these; one company, however, being in the houses farther back, to keep up the communication with the Augustas. The

outermost posts were held by a company of the Guard Schützen Regiment, these extending away in exposed field-watches on the margin of the Molleret, to the left of Le Bourget, as one looks towards Paris.

There was a lull in the firing presently, as regards musketry at least, and so Major Thummel condescended to enter the doorway wherein I prowled, and give me the history of the evening. It was not very eventful after all. Our outposts, it seems, as early as eight o'clock, had heard significant sounds in Drancy, which the French still obstinately refused to vacate. There were bugle calls and the tread of mustering men, and (so near are the positions) there could be heard also the tramp of men being marched across from Courneuve into Drancy. I must tell you, by the way, that this space, naturally a level plain almost bare of houses, has been furrowed by the French with three successive continuous lines of entrenchments. One interpretation is that they have so far sapped up towards Le Bourget; another is, that they have thus triplicated the defences of a tract they had judged to be exposed. Anyhow, the farther parallel touches with its left the Courneuve road at a point in advance of that village; comes with a slight sweep to the Lille road at a place where there are two or three houses; and is continued with a little more bend to the end of Drancy nearest Le Bourget. The second line has its left on Courneuve itself, and its right on the farm of Drancy, in the rear of the village of the same name. The *replie* line is the road from Courneuve to Baubigny. It was inside one of these lines that our foreposts heard the Frenchmen coming over into Drancy, to act as supports probably. A little before ten the guns—first of Aubervilliers, then of de l'Est, du Nord, and, last of all, of Romanville—began to shell Le Bourget furiously. Then two field batteries in the first French line between

the Lille road and Drancy got to work, and suddenly, just after nine, came a splash of musketry fire out of the thick mist and darkness. The Queen Elizabeths knew what was coming. Their patrols had been out feeling the interval between Le Bourget and Drancy, and the advance of a strong body of French troops had been notified. Every man was under cover; every man had finger on trigger, and muzzle out to the front. So when the French fire came, the Elizabeths gave it back steadily and with interest; not acting so foolishly as to rush out to close quarters in the open, but lying snugly behind their stout barricades and the strong walls of the houses, and firing in the direction whence came the French fire. It seems no Frenchmen were visible. They were within a hundred yards, but they came no farther. After firing they stood for a while, then gave ground and fell back towards Drancy. Yet again, about eleven, they had come on, much the same features characterizing this attempt as the last. And now had they got enough, did I think? asked the Major; or did I think they were gluttons, and would come at it once more?

They answered his question, not I. Just as he spoke came the "Steady, men!" from the officer by the barricade. There was a dull sound of tramping, sharpened by a few isolated shouts, and then a confused belch of musketry fire. I heard the officer by the barricades order—"Schnell feur!" and *schnell* was, beyond a doubt, that same *feur*. Nor were the French behindhand in their reply. One could hear the bullets pattering on the walls on the other side of the road, as if the fog had burst out into big hailstones. This steady firing lasted for some five minutes, then the French musketry fell away. In the comparative silence from the front there were audible easily the shouts of the officers, "*En avant!*" "*En avant!*" One officer—judging by the direction whence came the

firing, he must have commanded the right—had a very shrill voice, and as he screamed rather than shouted, a wretched dog close by began to bark in opposition; whereat the Queen Elizabeths laughed consumedly behind their cover. Another officer—how I pitied the gallant fellows!—ranged from wrath to sorrow in his desperate efforts to make his men charge. "*En avant*," he began, and repeated once or twice. "*Sacré nom de Dieu, en avant, canaille!*" and then he was ever so much nearer us, and must have dashed out to the front alone. "*Pour l'amour de Dieu en avant, mes enfants!*" But the *enfants* didn't see it. Indeed they did not see the pleasure of staying where they were. I heard no command of retreat given, but the firing dropped away to a distance, and intermittingly, and then ceased altogether. At a quarter to one there was an advance on the other side from Courneuve, but enfiladed in the way as the troops composing it were by the guard field-watches on the Dugny road; they never got so close as the assailants from Drancy, nor did they hold their ground so stubbornly. Till three o'clock the forts continued their fire, then all was silent again. And so ended this sortie—if you can call it a sortie—against Le Bourget. German loss: one man of the Queen Augustas, two of the Queen Elizabeths severely wounded. The Augusta man has his shoulder smashed by a shell; three men of the Queen Elizabeths slightly wounded. No officer touched. Have I wasted your space—taken up a column and more with a trumpery affair in which one side had not a single man killed? But surely there must have been ever so many Frenchmen killed and wounded? you suggest. Perhaps there were—indeed, I don't see how it is possible that they should not have suffered considerably. But they left nothing behind them, except here and there a red patch of blood on the

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snow-covered ground. Patrols of the guards were beating the front all night, as well to ensure security as to pick up any wounded men they might fall in with. They found none. The French had carried off their dead and wounded.

Jan. 16.—I have heard many expressions of pain and indignation here on account of the utterly gratuitous falsehood put in circulation by the *Wiener Fremdenblatt*, to the effect that disagreements have occurred between the King of Prussia and the Crown Prince of Saxony, and that the King of Saxony is coming to Versailles with the design of soldering up the unpleasantness. I don't wonder at these expressions, although the falsehood is too apparent to merit anything but contempt. There has never been anything but the utmost cordiality between Versailles and Margency, and nobody can live long in familiar relations with the latter head-quarters without becoming aware how genuine and hearty is this cordiality as regards the chiefs of the Maas army, and—judging from every appearance—how reciprocal is the good feeling. Ever since I became acquainted with the composition of this head-quarters' staff, I have looked upon it as a really valuable and successful auxiliary in the actual and virtual unification of Germany. Here we have Saxon officers, Würtemberger officers, Prussian officers, officers of the late Hanoverian army, all working together in the most enthusiastic and genial manner, living together in the same quarters, associating round the same board, taking their daily rides together, and, in fine, blending so thoroughly, that the differences, of what can scarcely with truth be called diverse nationality, are utterly invisible. The same thorough blending is apparent right down the ladder till you come to the private soldiers; among whom it is as marked as higher up. Saxons, guardsmen, and Würtembergers, have stood to one

another like men—like Germans—in more than two or three bloody tussles with the common enemy. They have shared the same bivouac; drunk out of the same bottle; and they are, in the words of the old song, “brethren all.” A large share of this thorough blending that has welded the Maas army into a consistent whole, from the staff to the field-watch, is due to the personal influence and personal attributes of the Crown Prince of Saxony himself—the commander of that army ever since it was first formed. The soldiers, who are the subjects of his father, speak of their Prince with a personal love and admiration which is right pleasant to listen to. “He is a gallant soldier and a true man,” said to me that wooden under-officer Schultz, his woodenness disappearing for the moment when he came to talk of his Prince. And Prince Albert has likewise won the personal liking and respect of the whole of his army, besides that portion of it that comes out of Saxony proper. The explanation is simple enough. He is a plain, frank, manly soldier; too fearless for the heir-apparent to a kingdom; utterly unskilled in Machiavellianism, and, likely enough, quite blind to the advantages it may possess. His *métier* is to command the Maas army, and he does so with credit and distinction. My own estimate of his soldierly frankness and straightforwardness of purpose carries me on to this conviction—that if on any point there should ever occur any misunderstanding between him and those at Versailles, he is just the man to get into his little oak-painted carriage, start off for Versailles without an escort—there never was a more unassuming Prince in such respects as these—drop into the Préfecture, have a quiet talk over the trouble with the King—who is a man of much the same straightforward soldierly

type as himself—put everything straight by that great institution, “word of mouth,” and drive back again to dinner here, nobody a whit the wiser; except, perhaps, his sagacious chief of the staff, General von Schlottheim. But it is all but impossible to conceive how a conjuncture demanding any such visit can arise. And of this all may be certain, that the good understanding between Margency and Versailles has never been ruffled by the most trivial difficulty.

A casual but wonderfully opportune evidence of the truth of what is above written has occurred since the paragraph was penned. There have been here a detachment of the staff officials, to make quarters in this château for the deputation from the army which is to visit Versailles for the purpose of supporting the prayer of the Reichstag, that King William shall accept the Imperial crown of Germany. The head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Saxony has been fixed upon as the rendezvous; and hither to-night come representatives of all grades from every German army in France. Here are the numbers: sixteen officers, twenty-six under-officers, and thirty-six honest men of the rank and file. My “humble roof” is called upon to afford accommodation for the sixteen officers, who have not yet turned up. I hear there are generals among them. It is a little curious how thus fortuitously I should come into close contact with the military deputation after having casually hit upon the civil one at Lagny, in its way home from Versailles. Monsieur Bourgeois, at the corner, has some very good cognac; and among Madame Sapey’s goods and chattels, of which I am the present beneficiary holder, is a jolly big punch-bowl. I have what the Irish call the “materials” in readiness for the advent of the deputation after a cold and wet ride; and it shall not be my fault

if we do not make a night of it, and drink right heartily to the Emperor of Germany. I believe the deputation is to wait on the Crown Prince of Saxony to-morrow morning to receive his formal and cordial congratulations as to the object of their mission ; after which they will proceed direct to Versailles.

CHAPTER XX.

WHILE a supreme human interest must be acknowledged to surround the circle within which, at the beginning of the New Year, two millions of people were suffering the heart-sickness of hope deferred, it was then obvious to all impartial observers, if not to the Parisians themselves, that their fate would be decided elsewhere than under the walls of their city. Early in January that indefatigable Minister of War, M. Gambetta, set no fewer than three great armies in motion for the deliverance of Paris by direct or indirect means. General Faidherbe, from whom probably least was expected, could, at any rate, manœuvre between the northern quadrilateral and Paris, and divert from Arras or St. Quentin the troops which might otherwise be employed against Ducrot or Vinoy. General Bourbaki was sent from Bourges to the east of France to raise the siege of Belfort, drive the besiegers back into the Rhine valley, and then advance on the eastern side of the Vosges, to destroy the main line of the German communications. But the most important task was reserved for General Chanzy, in whom M. Gambetta believed he had found one of those rare commanders raised up at great conjunctures to chastise the insolence of success and save his country. We have seen that on the 21st of December General Chanzy had regained Le Mans. The accounts transmitted from his head-quarters between that date and Christmas made the

public wonder how it had been possible for him to deliver the battles which he had fought almost incessantly since the 4th of December. His men were shoeless and ragged, and many of them had lost all military sentiment. When the time came at which the truth might be told without prejudice to the cause of France, General Chanzy magnanimously repudiated the exaggerated terms in which M. Gambetta had thought it politic to describe his achievements; but the more the truth is known about the material, the equipment, and the supply of his army during the first fortnight of December, the more credit will be given to its commander for the results which he was able to obtain with such an instrument. The Special Correspondent at the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia, who went down to Corbeil to see the prisoners from the Army of the Loire after the battles before Orleans, wrote:—

The Germans speak of some of the fighting they have had as very severe; but it is clear that it is like the efforts of a desperate man, ignorant of fencing, to resist a well-trained antagonist by sheer force of will. The Mobiles have not been able to deal with troops so much more skilful than themselves. Why, take the mere matter of shooting, and remember that these Mobiles have been armed with breech-loaders long since their training began, and the training is but a few weeks old. Remember that the Germans have been carefully taught to fire to the best advantage for years past. It is a curious glimpse of Mobile organization to study the views of the prisoners on the reason of their ill-success. Most of them attribute what has happened to an utter want of supplies at critical moments, and to the ignorance of the officers in military affairs. They all declare that these officers of Gardes Mobiles did their duty manfully, so far as leading their men into fire went, but

that they could not lead them out of fire in good order when the line fell back. That is as much as to say, that the discipline was not brought to a proper point. The officers were followed if they were known and liked, particularly if they hailed from the same town or village as most of their men. A stranger from another regiment, or, still worse, a Line officer coming among the Mobiles, would scarcely have been listened to at all. The Germans speak of the French guns as being well served but badly manœuvred, and say that a much larger average of shells explode now than formerly. The foreign rifles in the hands of the French are described as very effective arms. They have bought weapons abroad quite as good as their lost Chassepôts, and if they only knew how to use them, would do great execution. But the fire is rapid without being sufficiently superintended by the officers, and much ammunition is thrown away. There is altogether nothing to be ashamed of in the ill-fortune of a newly-organized force opposed to skilful veterans. But the second capture of Orleans reads us a lesson which cannot be too carefully read. Arming volunteers in haste with weapons that are new to them, calling out pensioners and militiamen to be massed into an army without sufficient means of transport or sufficient trained officers to weld the mass, is in France a last desperate measure. The Army of the Loire was brought into the field because France was in extremity. But for us to rely on beginning a war with much the same drawbacks, would be madness. Above all, we must foster a military train that shall be capable of taking into itself and regulating the vast resources of transport which we possess.

How the poor fellows who were to re-inforce Chanzy's army, and enable it to advance once more against the

trained corps of Prince Frederick Charles, were cared for before they were turned over to their commander, is shown in the following letter from Rennes, dated December 30:—

At the present moment the Camp of Conlie exists but in name. Ever changing, modifying, suppressing, and creating, the delegation of Bordeaux, by the mouth of its effervescent Minister of War, has thought proper to raise the camp, after allowing several millions of francs to be spent upon it for defensive works. The troops who are now daily evacuating Conlie are to be dispersed, we hear, among various encampments, to be formed principally in *Ile-et-Vilaine* and *Mayenne*. It was lately announced that many were to be sent to an encampment formed on the *Landes of Dingé*, not far from *Combourg*. The site, however, not being suitable for the creation of a camp, we learn to-day that this project has been abandoned. Such of the *Mobiles* and *Mobilisés* of Conlie who were armed, have been sent to *Le Mans* to join the army of *General Chanzy*, which, it would appear, is growing more and more formidable every day. Some of the unarmed *Mobiles* have been sent to *Fougeray-Langon*, others, those of *Loire-Inférieure*, have been despatched to *St. Malo*, *St. Servan*, and many others are to be sent to the *Landes of Izé*, in the environs of *Pertre*, and no great distance from *Vitré*, and to *Châteaugiron*, *Piré*, and *Janzé*. They will thus be dispersed all over *Brittany*.

Here, at *Rennes*, we have had continual arrivals and departures, and have yet many *Mobiles* and *Mobilisés* in the town. The first detachment, which arrived about a week ago, when the temperature was even colder than it is now, were received by the military authorities, who had been informed several days beforehand of their coming, with the most shameful neglect and inattention.

They reached Rennes in the afternoon, and until late at night rambled about the streets, cold and hungry, without any quarters being assigned them. Why did the authorities not lodge them in the various public edifices if they had no other quarters to give them? Surely it would have been better than to have allowed these fasting and frozen young fellows to sleep in the streets on the steps of the houses, and without so much as a handful of straw to protect them from the weather. When on the following morning the inhabitants of Rennes awoke they were naturally very indignant, and the local newspapers loudly attacked the civil authorities, who, they imagined, were responsible for the neglect with which the Mobiles had been treated. M. le Maire forthwith addressed a letter to the various local journals, in which he stated that on hearing that the arrival of some 8,000 or 10,000 Mobiles was to be expected in Rennes, the municipal administration immediately took measures to secure barracks, in various large unoccupied buildings, for them. It appears that when his arrangements were completed, he received a letter from the military authorities, informing him that measures had been taken by them for encamping the troops, and that his plans would not be carried out. Apparently, however, the military administration never moved in the matter. The day following that on which the first detachment of the Conlie Mobiles arrived here, a train from the camp brought in the 64th Regiment of *infanterie de marche*, composed of some 2,500 men. They were told to pitch their tents and encamp on the *Place*. Such an order was impossible to be executed. The ground was frozen so hard that they could not even plant the tent poles. These poor soldiers, frozen to death and fatigued with a long journey accomplished in trucks, were about to abandon the attempt to encamp

in despair, when many of the inhabitants of Rennes, who were present, generously came forward and offered lodgings to these unfortunate victims of official neglect. Rich and poor, *bourgeois* and *ouvriers*, all came forward and offered one a bed, another a seat by his fireside, until all these neglected soldiers were lodged. In the night between Tuesday and Wednesday, at half-past eleven o'clock, the 3rd and 4th Battalions from Brest were assembled at the railway station at Conlie, and at five in the morning left for Rennes in cattle-trucks. On arriving at their destination, at 3 A.M., they received orders to encamp in the Champ de Mars, in the mud and water, for during the night there had been a general thaw. Both officers and soldiers declared that they would not pitch their tents and sleep in the pool—for, in consequence of the thaw, the Champ de Mars was all but a sheet of water. All were extremely astounded with their reception. The superior officers went and complained to the General commanding the subdivision, M. le Capitaine de vaisseau Lafon, who, two hours later, came and inspected the troops, and permitted them to encamp on the boulevards surrounding the Champ de Mars, where they were not much better off than before. Fresh detachments from Conlie arrive here every day, and much the same sort of thing as I have just mentioned still occurs. To see these brave young fellows, their uniforms in disorder, and covered with dirt, wearing ponderous sabots, wandering at hazard through the streets, all apparently overcome with *ennui*, some coughing so badly that they can hardly stand, is indeed a pitiable sight. Out of these sinewy and robust young fellows, the finest soldiers in the world might have been formed; but official neglect and mismanagement have so generally debased them, that it would be far more prudent to predict their utter ruin and incapacity, than to assert

that they are capable of sustaining any serious engagement. We have had enough now of the *levée en masse*, and the glorious souvenirs of '92. M. Gambetta, with his insalubrious camps and idiotic system of herding together unarmed men under the command of intriguing generals, has simply ruined the constitution of many thousands, and rendered them totally unfit for soldiers. To think that he has decreed the formation of eleven such camps as Conlie, and that at one time he proposed assembling together in the cold this winter—and doubtless in inactivity, as no arms are to be had—all the married men of France!

Before the old year had expired it had begun to be remarked at Orleans, where Prince Frederick Charles had his head-quarters, that "mischief was brewing." Reports reached the Prince's staff that the people were greatly excited by new expectations, and while the character of these was being discussed, a kind of challenge from General Chanzy to the German army was forwarded through the commandant of Vendôme, who had received it under a flag of truce. This communication was in the following terms:—

To the Prussian Commandant at Vendôme,—I am informed that violence, for which I can find no language suitable to express my indignation, has been resorted to by the troops under your command against an innocent population of St. Calais, notwithstanding their good treatment of your sick and wounded. Your officers have extorted money and authorized pillage. This is an abuse of power which will weigh upon your conscience, though patriotism may enable our countrymen to bear it. But it cannot be permitted that you should add to this injury a gratuitous insult. You have alleged that we are defeated. This is false.

We have fought and held you in check since the 4th of December. You have dared to treat as cowards men who could not answer you, pretending that they submitted to the will of the Government of National Defence in resisting when they really wished for peace. I am justified in protesting against this statement by the resistance of the whole of France, and by the resistance of the army, which up to the present time you have not been able to conquer. We re-assert what our struggle has already taught you; we shall struggle on, conscious of our good right, and determined to triumph at any cost. We shall struggle on *à outrance*, without truce or mercy. It is now no longer a question of fighting against a loyal enemy, but against devastating hordes, whose sole object is the ruin and humiliation of a nation fighting for the preservation of its honour, its independence, and the maintenance of its rank.

You reply to the generosity with which we treat your prisoners and wounded by insolence, by arson, and by pillage. I protest with indignation, in the name of humanity and the law of nations, which you trample under foot.

The Prince was informed that this protest had been read three times to the French troops on parade, by order of General Chanzy. It was inferred from these facts and reports that with aid from the west, and perhaps from the south, Chanzy was about to commence some new movement for the relief of Paris, and, severe as the weather was, it was resolved to march out and meet him. Accordingly dispositions were made for a gradual concentration towards Vendôme, and for the first three days of the new year the roads from Orleans leading in that direction were covered, as far as the

eye could see, with infantry, cavalry, and train. The 10th German Corps guarded the advanced positions on the Loir, occupying Blois and Vendôme, and the country between. Von der Tann's Bavarians were resting near Orleans. The 9th Corps held Orleans with detachments before it and higher up the Loire. The 3rd Corps were higher up the river towards Gien. It was intended that these various corps should advance by different roads towards the line of the Loir, drive back the French before Vendôme, find out the army of Chanzy, overthrow it, and taking Le Mans, destroy all hope of the relief of Paris by the troops of the West. The 18th Division (9th Corps) was to reach the Loir at Morée, and having cleared the way, prepare to act as a reserve. The 3rd Corps were to cross the river near Vendôme, while the 10th were to march to La Chartre, and be ready to turn Chanzy's right, and then join the other corps in the battle before Le Mans. The Duke of Mecklenburg, who was at Chartres, was to advance and drive in Chanzy's left. Duke William of Mecklenburg, with the 6th Cavalry Division, was to keep the left of the Prince's forces; the 2nd Cavalry Division was to maintain the communication between the 9th Corps, which formed the Prince's right, and the left of the Duke of Mecklenburg's army. The 4th Cavalry Division was to protect the Grand Duke's right, and the 5th was to keep watch in the country north of his line of march.

On the 4th of January Prince Frederick Charles moved his head-quarters to Beaugency, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg being still at Chartres. The 3rd Corps was by that time concentrated at and around Marchenoir; the 18th Division was near Orleans, the 19th at Blois, and the 20th at Vendôme.

On the 5th the Prince moved to Oucques; the 3rd Corps having their head-quarters in the same place. The 18th Division moved up from Orleans to Ouzouer-le-Marche,

and took its place on the right of the force under the immediate command of the Prince. The 20th was still before Vendôme, skirmishing with General Chanzy's advanced posts, and the 19th moved up from Blois towards St. Amand. The Grand Duke advanced from Chartres southwards to Illiers.

On the 6th Prince Frederick Charles marched from Oucques to Vendôme, just on the other side of which the 10th Corps was seriously engaged with the French before the Forest of Vendôme, supported by the 3rd Corps, which had advanced that day from Marchenoir. The opposition was greater than the Germans had expected, the French fighting better than usual. The fire of musketry was hot in the front, but the Germans—Hanoverians and Brandenburgers—pressed on, until their artillery and needle-guns had borne down all opposition, and their leading division had reached a rivulet between Azay and Villiers. On the right, the 18th Division had reached Morée, on the Loir, north of Vendôme. While this engagement was going on, Duke William of Mecklenburg fell in with considerable forces of the French on the left, near Villerporcher, and was unable to proceed. This obstruction made it necessary to send General Hartmann, with a cavalry division and a brigade of infantry from the 10th Corps, in the direction of St. Amand, whereupon the French troops in that quarter fell back towards Tours, and were transported by railway to Le Mans. On the same day the Grand Duke marched with the 17th Division to Brou, the 22nd advancing to La Loupe and La Fourche.

On the 7th the weather changed from frost to thaw, and a mist made it necessary for the Germans to advance with caution. The 10th Corps remained stationary until the attack on Duke William had been repulsed, but the 5th and 6th and 18th Divisions advanced steadily, occasionally coming in contact with the rear-guards of the

French columns. By nightfall the two first of the three Divisions had reached the line of the Braye, at Savigny and Sargé, and the last was at Epinay. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg moved his head-quarters to Beaumont-les-Autels, the 17th Division being at Authon, and the 22nd at Nogent-le-Rotrou. On the 8th the ground was again frozen, and the Prince moved his head-quarters to St. Calais, where he had the 5th and 6th Divisions not far in front of him, on each side of the high road, the 18th Division being just behind Illiers. The 10th Corps, having pushed aside the obstacles to its advance, was at La Chartre on the Loire, on its way to Le Mans. To connect La Chartre with St. Calais, a detachment of six squadrons of cavalry, one battalion of infantry, and six guns, was formed, and placed under the command of General Schmidt. On the same day, the 8th, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg reached La Ferté St. Bernard with his entire infantry corps; the 4th Cavalry Division marched down the Huisne to Bellême; the 2nd kept up the communication between the Grand Duke's and the Prince's corps; and the 5th was on the Grand Duke's right.

On the 9th the roads were once more hard as iron with frost, and covered with ice, which remained for days, and made the cavalry all but useless in the actions which were to result in the capture of Le Mans. The Prince's head-quarters were this day moved to Bouloire. Both divisions of the 3rd Corps were at Ardenay and along the line of the Narrais. The 18th Division was with the Prince; the 19th about Vancé; the 20th at Grand Lucé. The Grand Duke moved with the 17th Division to Le Luard, near Connerré, the 22nd occupying Sceaux, on the main road, six miles in advance of La Ferté. The German army was now within fighting distance of Le Mans. The Prince had in front of him an army whose force had been stated in telegrams from Bordeaux of a week before at 200,000

men, but was rated by the Germans at the time as 160,000, and has since been affirmed by English correspondents at General Chanzy's head-quarters to have been 118,000. The armies of Prince Frederick Charles and the Duke of Mecklenburg numbered only 85,000, although in telegrams sent to Bordeaux from Le Mans they were reported to reach a strength of 180,000. But both men and horses were in the finest condition, and the service of the supply departments was admirably performed. The 9th Corps had very recently shown its marching powers, by having advanced on the 16th and 17th of December more than fifty English miles in twenty-four hours. The men were much attached to the Prince, their commander, who on the 9th marched with them for twelve miles with the greatest ease. The ground in front of Le Mans is of such a conformation that it has been declared impossible for any general to take up a bad defensive position there. General Chanzy's army held a series of wooded heights, which he had had plenty of time to fortify. His men were armed with breech-loading rifles from the United States, of a pattern far surpassing the needle-gun, and he moreover was well supplied with the Gattling gun, a mitrailleuse firing a heavier projectile than that used in the Imperial army early in the campaign.

On the 10th, Prince Frederick Charles ordered General Alvensleben to lead the 3rd Corps, his Brandenburgers, from Ardenay, and clear the principal road to Le Mans, nearly up to the Huisne, behind which the French had taken up their position. The General ordered three of his brigades to advance by different forest-tracks and meet at night at Changé, while the fourth pushed on as far as Champagne. One of these three brigades, the 9th, met a French corps in the woods near Chelles, and drove them back towards Parigné, when the commander of the 10th Brigade, attracted

by the firing, came up, and seized the opportunity to attack Parigné, capturing two mitrailleuses and many prisoners.

The 10th Brigade next attacked Changé, and there ensued an engagement of the most desperate character. The men fought for hours from bank to bank and from field to field. Hundreds had fallen on both sides, under a prolonged rifle and shrapnel fire, and Changé was still held with great tenacity by the French, when the 10th Brigade came up and made a flank attack on the village, which gave the Germans possession of the place. The action on the 10th is by the Germans distinguished as the battle of Changé: the engagements of the 11th and 12th are called the battles of Le Mans.

On the morning of the 11th, the French watched the enemy from a position which might well be deemed impregnable. A curving range of hills forms a vast natural parapet before Le Mans, having the River Huisne for its wet ditch. On this parapet the French had placed guns and mitrailleuses side by side, more thickly planted than the Germans had ever before seen in the campaign. All the bridges over the river were in their hands. The grand *chaussée* from St. Calais and Vendôme was that by which the Prince's 18th Division was advancing, but the river is fenced off from the road by a range of hills, running from the north-east towards Le Mans, but meeting the Huisne at Yvré. The Prince had only three Divisions, the 5th and 6th of the 3rd Corps, and the 18th of the 9th Corps with him, for the Grand Duke had not advanced so rapidly as had been hoped for, and the 10th Corps, detained at Montoire, had got no farther than Mulsanne and Ruaudin, on the south-westerly road from Le Mans. The wisdom of secrecy in war was never more manifest than in the operations of this day, for it may safely be affirmed, that had the French known the real

number of the force opposed to them, they would never have permitted their position to be taken. Their ignorance, or at least the possibility of deceiving them by an audacious movement, was one of the elements in the calculations of the German commander, who might have been attacked with a fair chance of success, had the French been well served by spies. The Prince ordered the 18th Division to carry the hills above Champagne, and sent the 5th and 6th Divisions, forming the 3rd Corps, against the Huisne. The 3rd received the order to advance on the 14th, in the middle of the day. Their numbers could not have exceeded 18,000 men, for they left Orleans only 22,000 strong, and had been fighting ever since. They advanced, however, against the great natural rampart, held by 50,000 men, over ground covered with woods, and intersected with lanes separated from them by ditches and banks. The woods were filled with French riflemen, and beyond the river, in front, were the French artillery and mitrailleuses. Alvensleben's brigades advanced, the 10th going northward to try and gain the road to Le Mans by Savigné, and the 11th marched upon Château-les-Noyers, about 500 yards from the Huisne; the 12th was sent to attack Yvré, and the 9th was held in reserve. The 11th, in executing its orders, soon found itself enveloped in a perfect tempest of fire from the French batteries on the hill opposite Château-les-Arches. After the battle not a tree could be found that was not marked with balls. The 11th was compelled to give way, and the 12th, recalled from Yvré, was sent to its assistance. The latter attacked Les Arches and drove the French out; but when the divisional artillery was brought up, it was found impossible to hold the position in face of the French fire. In the evening the 8th Regiment was sent forward from the reserves to its assistance, as a French force of 25,000 was pushing forward. It was

afterwards found that the latter had been sent forward to secure the road by which the French force retreating from before the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg might enter Le Mans. The 3rd Corps had not been able to accomplish the task assigned to it. It had fought gallantly all day, and held its own against fearful odds, but that was all. The 18th Division, however, which held the main road from Vendôme, had been more fortunate, and had carried the heights above Champagne. The Germans, disappointed with their tactical achievements, did not know what advantages they had really gained this day. While Alvensleben was vexing himself in his quarters, General Chanzy was writing a despatch announcing his own defeat. In the course of the night he telegraphed from Le Mans to Bordeaux the following message to M. Gambetta :—

“ Our positions were good last night, excepting at La Tuillerie, where the Mobiles of Brittany disbanded themselves, thereby causing the abandonment of the positions we occupied on the right bank of the Huisne. Vice-Admiral Jauréguiberry and the other generals think a retreat is necessary under these circumstances. I resign myself to it very unwillingly.”

On the morning of the 12th the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, who had fought a successful action at Connerré, was able to move his own head-quarters to Montfort, his 17th Division being at Corneille, and the 22nd at La Croix. The French had already begun their retreat; the guns had almost all disappeared from the hills; nevertheless, as a matter of prudence, General Chanzy had ordered an attack on Les Noyers, which, in the prevailing uncertainty, and after the heavy loss of life on the previous day, caused some anxiety to the Germans. The attack, however, was repulsed; the 6th Division took Yvré; while the 10th Corps, which had completed its toil-

some march along slippery roads, and was joined by General Schmidt's detachment, after some fighting at Château de la Pallière, reached the heights above Le Mans, and threw some shells into the town on the retreating columns of the French. The 5th Division followed in the same direction, and the Germans passed into Le Mans. They encountered some opposition, the French firing upon them from houses, and it was only on the following day, January 13, that Prince Frederick Charles thought it prudent to remove his head-quarters to the captured town. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg was sent towards Alençon. The 18th Division pushed on, and occupied the entrenched camp at Conlie. The 10th Corps was sent on towards Laval, but found the bridges broken up, and was not sufficiently strong to overcome such opposition as Chanzy's troops were still able to offer. At Le Mans and Conlie an enormous quantity of arms, ammunition, food, and—what was even of more consequence—railway materials and rolling stock, fell into the hands of the Germans. On the 16th Prince Frederick Charles reported that, in the engagements from the 6th of January to that date, he and the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg had taken from the enemy more than 22,000 unwounded prisoners, two colours, nineteen guns, and more than a thousand loaded conveyances, besides a large quantity of arms, ammunition, and war material. The Army of the Loire was broken up, and with it Paris had lost its best hope of relief. The Germans had fought well, and had gained immense results with means relatively small. They owed these in no small degree to the masterly strategy of their commander. Prince Frederick Charles had applied against Chanzy the principles which had succeeded against Benedek in the Bohemian campaign—had made a double attack upon the enemy, the one line at right angles to the other. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg's Corps had not been

moved directly against Le Mans from Chartres, but had been required to make a *détour*, so as to descend in a northerly direction, and compel Chanzy's army to present two fronts. This mode of operating implies a certain contempt for the enemy, for it offends against the rule of attacking with superior numbers. But the capacity of a commander is shown by his knowing when a rule must be observed, and when for sufficient reasons it may be set aside.

The complexion of affairs at Le Mans and in the West during these momentous occurrences was thus described by the Special Correspondent sent out to General Chanzy's Army, in a letter dated January 6 :—

Despite all that has been said about the mistrust and resentment with which the French are supposed to regard all foreigners at the present moment, I can avouch that I never travelled with a more polite and communicative party of men than my *compagnons de route* between St. Malo and Rennes. Consisting, as they did, of an officer in the ex-Imperial army, on his way to join General Bouédec ; a dealer in arms, returning from Birmingham to Nantes ; a Franc-tireur from Mézières ; a Breton, captain of the Garde Mobile ; and the chaplain attached to his corps, one might have fairly expected a considerable divergence in their respective political opinions. But so far from this being the case, they were unanimous in their resolve to do their best towards driving the invader from the soil of France, and equally so in shelving all questions as to the future government of the country, until the happy result above indicated had been accomplished. With regard to local matters the same unanimity prevailed. All deeply regretted the resignation of Keratry, whose name was a tower of strength in this part of the country, and who it appears has been driven out of office by the machina-

tions of his enemies. The frightful destitution which existed at the camp of Conlie, where hapless recruits were herded together up to their knees in mud, and had to pass entire days without food of any kind, was declared to be no fault of the Count's, but entirely due to the indifference and even enmity of those appointed to second him. The fact of arms having been issued to these men and withdrawn a few hours afterwards to be despatched southward, was set down to fear on the part of Gambetta lest the thousands of Bretons assembled at Conlie should hoist the white standard of Henri Cinq; and therefore the arms in question have been sent to the south of France, to arm those enthusiastic patriots who have, up to the present, confined their efforts on behalf of their oppressed country to parading the streets of their respective towns with red flags and drums *ad libitum*, and in screeching the "Marseillaise." This act of suicidal folly was in reality quite uncalled for: as the "Breton bretonnant" on my right observed, "We are all fighting now for France, not for a King or a Republic"—which sentiment was received with unqualified approval by his companions. The Franc-tireur des Ardennes, who informed us with due solemnity that he had entered his corps for the sole purpose of being killed on account of a love affair, and who, having failed to accomplish his object in the neighbourhood of Mézières, was on his way to seek better success on the banks of the Loire, remarked, in the quietest way possible, that he had put an end to the existence of no less than eight Uhlans, and exhibited, with legitimate pride, the *spolia opima* of a departed Prussian officer killed by him, in the shape of a very neatly-fitting pair of cavalry boots at that moment adorning his lower limbs. Every one, even the chaplain, seemed to regard the slaughter of the original proprietor as of no more

moment than the killing of a barn-door fowl; but the boots, as a trophy won from the enemy, were examined with great interest. The officer, who is attached at present to the staff of General Bouëdec, and is on his way to join that commander at Le Mans, then narrated some of the high-handed proceedings on the part of the Prussians which are taking place daily in the Ardennes, the district from which he hails, and which he has revisited in disguise since his escape from Sedan. It appears that the soldiers of King William have for some time past been engaged in cutting down all the oaks in the forests belonging to the French Government, and in endeavouring to find a purchaser for the timber. In this search they have been hitherto unsuccessful, owing to the refusal of the Belgian Government to allow the property in question to be conveyed through its territory, and they now threaten to burn all rather than allow it to return into the hands of its original owners, for they really have no use for it themselves. Opposite the village of Douzy a train happened to run off the main line into a siding, owing to a mistake made in turning the points by a signalman. This signalman, like all the *employés* on the line in question, happens to be a Prussian, but such a fact did not hinder the authorities of that nation from seizing two of the principal inhabitants of the village and threatening to shoot them unless a fine of 6,000 francs were paid by the community. The village, however, was a very poor one, and could not manage to raise a larger amount than 2,000 francs, which sum was in the end accepted as sufficient.

These facts I have on the authority of Monsieur le Capitaine Entz, late of a cuirassier regiment, and at present aide-de-camp to General Bouëdec. Thanks to the kindness of this gentleman, I was enabled to reach Le Mans from Rennes without difficulty, for the line

being closed to civilians from Laval onwards, he included me in his requisition for places, and thus spared me the necessity of hiring a carriage of some kind at the latter place in order to continue my journey. On arriving at Le Mans, at two in the morning, we vainly endeavoured to obtain sleeping accommodation at half a dozen hotels, and were finally forced to return to the station, where we passed the remainder of the small hours ensconced in a railway carriage, the booking offices, waiting-rooms, &c., being crammed with soldiers in a similar plight to ourselves. Some of these unhappy fellows were complaining loudly, but I am happy to say that the great majority bore the discomfort with placid equanimity, and set it all down to the fortune of war. Le Mans is crowded with troops of every description, the majority, however, being Mobiles from Brittany. Their arms and equipment, as may be expected, are of very varied character; the Remington appears to be the most prevalent weapon, though I noticed several Sniders lying about the station, more than one of which bore the impression, "Tower, 1870," and the British Government stamp. One has a right to wonder how these came there, but I intend refraining from all indiscreet questions till I have seen General Chanzy.

Jan. 8.—The town of fat pullets—for the *poularde du Mans* is held in as high estimation amongst our neighbours as the fowl of Dorking amongst ourselves—is at present swarming with a bird of somewhat different breed, the French fighting cock. De Chanzy's head-quarters are established in a house fronting the handsome Gothic Préfecture, and his followers are to be met with in every direction; the streets literally swarm with them—Linesmen who have lost the natty smartness which distinguishes the French soldier in the piping times of peace; sturdy Marines, both infantry and artillery; Mobiles and

Mobilisés equipped in varied fashions, and a few dashing-looking Papal Zouaves, in their elegant uniform of grey and scarlet. Cavalry, however, are lacking, for, with the exception of some gendarmes, they have been despatched to the front. Some dismounted cuirassiers, in long grey cloaks and forage caps, lounge disconsolately about, apparently regretting the absence of their four-footed companions; and a few sons of the desert, muffled to the teeth in scarlet burnouses, stalk with Oriental gravity through the crowd, or dash past perched on the high-backed saddles with which their steeds are furnished. All day long trains of carts and waggons laden with stores and provisions roll through the streets, whilst smartly got up ambulances, belonging to private societies, mixed with the ruder and more battered vehicles of this character attached to the military hospitals, are to be seen on every open plot of ground. The station yard is alternately filled and emptied with arriving and departing battalions, for whose accommodation numerous vendors of hot coffee, sausages, bread, woollen socks, blankets, and those blue or scarlet flannel sashes so dear to the French soldier, have established themselves in a long row of wooden sheds erected along one side of it. Scores of boys are clustered in this particular neighbourhood, each equipped with a stock-in-trade consisting of a square box, a pot of grease, and a brush, and drive a roaring trade in cleaning and greasing the boots and holding the horses of the officers; for the officers of every rank are really great in the matter of boots. The sturdy old-fashioned Linesman with the close-cropped hair, long tight redingote and Crimean medal, contents himself with a pair of ordinary stout wellingtons, reaching to just below the knee, whilst the Marine officers are mostly furnished with a capital combination of boot and gaiter in one, made of untanned

leather, and certainly the very thing for an infantry man.

But the dandies of the Mobiles and the Staff soar to the height of extravagance in Russia and enamelled leather, and encase their nether limbs in the most fantastic productions of the followers of St. Crispin. Some reaching far above mid thigh, and adorned with numerous straps and buckles, intended to maintain them in position, are worn *pro tem.* turned down almost to the ankle, in order to display their scarlet lining to the admiring gaze of all beholders. Owing to the varied sources from which uniforms of all kinds have had to be obtained, a considerable diversity prevails amongst these also, and a *tenuis de fantaisie*, which usually consists of a long jacket, frog-and-fur trimmed, with a gold aiguillette, is greatly in favour amongst the officers. The privates whom I have seen, though equipped in a very varied fashion, are mostly comfortably clad, and are far better off with respect to shoes than recent accounts might have led one to expect. The cloth of some of their uniforms is unmistakably shoddyish, but a good upper benjamin covers a multitude of sins of this kind, and those unprovided with the comfortable regulation *capote* have supplemented this deficiency either by a sheepskin cloak, or by a wonderful and almost indescribable garment of no shape in particular, and constructed of a material apparently a cross between that of horse-cloths and flour sacks. Hundreds of these sartorial triumphs are offered for sale in every direction. *En somme*, the best equipped troops are those of the Marine infantry and artillery, and the gendarmes, which latter have laid down their civil functions, and taken to the field once more.

As might be expected, the presence of so large a number of troops renders the town extremely lively during the daytime, though the prefectorial regulation that all cafés, &c., must be closed by nine in the evening causes a

singular contrast after that hour has struck. As for the inhabitants, they do not appear in the slightest degree afflicted by the sufferings of their unhappy country ; on the contrary, a profound indifference appears to prevail amongst them, very different indeed to the enthusiasm manifested in the more western departments. Several officers have loudly declared that a visit from the Prussians would be about the best thing that could happen to the Manceaux, since it would teach them to be a little more attentive to those who are risking their lives for France, whilst at the same time remarking that, should such a visit take place, they no doubt would be received with the same servility that has been shown by several municipalities in Normandy. Several of the local journals are filled with those severe personal criticisms upon the members of the Government of Defence which are happily unknown amongst us, and one of these reactionary organs is at present trying to get up a panic, on the ground that, the railways being exclusively used for military purposes, the town is no longer able to obtain a supply of provisions from the surrounding districts, and consequently a famine is imminent. The shopkeepers, however, are far from expressing similar views ; they view the influx of military visitors with a certain amount of satisfaction ; and no wonder, for they regard all as fish that comes to their net, and spoil the Philistine and the Israelite with the most perfect impartiality. This is only natural, since they know not how long the harvest will last ; and the truth is, that although communication has suffered considerably, a decree of the Minister of the Interior, which has just been issued, calling on the Compagnie des Chemins de Fer de l'Ouest to run a certain number of luggage and passenger trains a day, will cause this to be remedied.

Jan. 10.—The glorious example set by Brittany has not

found many imitators in the adjoining provinces. We all know how the inhabitants of Normandy have acted, and those of Maine and Anjou appear perfectly ready to imitate them in case of necessity. The peasantry of these districts display the characteristics of the "frugal swain" *par excellence*. Their constant care is to increase their store in every possible manner, but as to following to the field some warlike lord, nothing can be farther from their intentions. Were it not for the abominable requisitions, they would, perhaps, regard the contest with rather a favourable eye than otherwise. These requisitions are their *bête noire*, and I have heard numerous stories, many of them from eye-witnesses, of their having burnt hay and corn and killed horses rather than allow them to be pressed into the service of their country. Situate as they are, "between the devil and the deep sea," or, in other words, between the French and the Prussians, their position is certainly not an enviable one; but it would really appear, from all the accounts one hears, that the soldiers of King William are the only ones who come in for the small share of politeness they deign to manifest. "If," remarked an officer, in presence of a large assembly of his colleagues, "you are riding in the country and ask a peasant if there is any news, he invariably answers in the negative. 'But,' say you, 'there was a fight close by here yesterday.'—'Oh, yes.'—'Which side won?'—'Don't know.'—'Are there any Prussians in the neighbourhood?'—'Don't know.'—'They say there is a battalion of them in the village yonder. Is it so?'—'It may be so.' And if you ride on into a village filled with them you may be sure no one will warn you back." And this statement was confirmed with one voice by his comrades present. "The Prussians get whatever they want, whilst our men are left to starve in the streets," is a continual cry. The enmity existing

between the peasants and the Franks-tireurs, who, by uselessly attempting to defend open villages, have drawn down the wrath of the enemy upon the unfortunate inhabitants, is easily explicable; but even this does not excuse the utter lack of even a spark of patriotism. Of course the Republicans set all this down to the degrading effects of twenty years of the Imperial régime. By the way, speaking of Franks-tireurs, it appears that the gentry of the various Free Corps quartered in this neighbourhood have been carrying on matters with rather a high hand lately, as is shown by a récent general order placing them under strict military control. Let us hope that the misdeeds set down to their account are rather due to the Prussians, who, according to a letter addressed to the *Moniteur* by an eye-witness, an American gentleman, are in the habit of disguising themselves as Franks-tireurs, and in that costume committing all manner of atrocities.

This, indeed, is universally admitted, as is also their great superiority in the matter of discipline and the good that results therefrom. The French officers of the regular army, who have been so fortunate as to have hitherto escaped captivity, all frankly acknowledge this, and deplore the fact that it is impossible for them to maintain a like degree of order amongst the men under their command. As night descends the Prussian camps become silent as the grave; every one there knows his place, and where to obtain whatever he wants; while the French are in a continual uproar for hours after darkness has fallen, crying out for quartermasters, sergeant-majors, and fourriers, food, fuel, water, &c. As to actual fighting, the French cling to the idea that, at close quarters, with the bayonet, they are infinitely superior to their adversaries, but that at the game of long bowls the artillery fire of these latter is unmatch-

able. "They get their range at once, and when once they have it they knock us over like ninepins. Nothing was ever seen like it," As to the Uhlans—by which term they imply the Prussian cavalry in general—they affirm that they have been considerably reduced in number since the commencement of the war, a service due in a great measure to certain corps of *Francs-tireurs* who have taken their mission seriously. The *Spahis*, too, have been employed against them with some success. There is no doubt that whatever violations of the laws of property may have been committed by the invaders, their progress has been marked by a scrupulous respect for female honour. A few isolated cases of assault may have occurred, but all who have been brought into contact with them are willing to render them due justice in this particular. Indeed, I find a spirit of frankness and a readiness to do justice to the foe, and to admit the shortcomings of the French army, prevalent amongst almost all the officers I have met. The lesson of defeat has certainly not been lost upon them. They are to be distinguished by an utter absence of brag, and a calm resolution to do their best. They are the most truthful and modest of Frenchmen, contrasting favourably with those shameless and wanton liars, the journalists. The golden rule at present is never to believe a single word you may see in print, but to trust entirely to your eyes, ears, and powers of cross-examination. The latest *canard* published here is so amusing that I cannot forbear reproducing it. It is to the effect that the Prussians in garrison at Metz are so reduced in number that any one desiring to leave the town is first carefully rendered insensible by means of chloroform, and in that condition conveyed through the lines, so that he may not perceive and report the deficiency of guards at the various posts. And there are men who believe these

stories, though, I am happy to say, they do not gain universal credit. The influence of the French press has been steadily decreasing since the war began, and people begin now to judge for themselves a little more than of yore.

As to the prospects of an ultimate success for France, considerable diversity of opinion prevails. The Bretons of all classes are hopeful and enthusiastic, but many of their comrades from other provinces, when interrogated on this subject, look grave and shake their heads. Many of the private soldiers are getting discouraged, and if the civil population of Mans does not cry for peace openly, it does not hesitate to acknowledge that it is thoroughly weary of war. There is great difficulty in collecting the taxes; the people cannot or will not pay, and if the sinews of war fail, things cannot go on much longer. "Why does not England interfere?" is a common question; but the questioner frequently answers it himself by remarking that she dares not. Indeed, the position of an Englishman in France at present is about as unenviable as can be conceived. As to news, it is impossible to communicate any. All that transpires is contained in the official telegrams, which you receive in London before they are published here. We know fighting is going on along our front, and we hear the French have gained slight advantages, but it will hardly be believed that this information reaches us from Bordeaux. The reason of this is, that all reports are sent there by our commanders, and only so much of them as the Government chooses to make known is telegraphed to the prefects for publication.

10 A.M.—A number of troops have been marching through the streets whilst I have been writing, and I hear from an officer arrived from General Jouffroy's division, that though the advantage in fighting has been on the side

of the French, they have been obliged for strategic reasons to fall back from some of their advanced positions. It is said that General Chanzy is about to leave the town, so I am going out to obtain further news.

6 P.M.—Great emotion has prevailed here throughout the latter portion of the day. At an early hour in the afternoon the General left the town for an unknown destination. As my attempts to fathom this destination only led to my being arrested three times, I have been forced to content myself with looking sharply about me with my mouth shut. Ambulance trains, baggage waggons, and provision carts are pouring out of the town in the direction of Vendôme, the troops having preceded them at an early hour this morning. Cannon have been heard from this quarter for the last hour, and those who profess to judge the distance from the sound maintain that fighting is going on within three leagues of this place—rumour says at the village of Champigny. The railway keeps bringing in troops from the rear, and hurrying them forward to the front; the streets in the neighbourhood of the station are blocked up with stragglers desirous of joining their corps; the bells are tolling in all the church steeples; but whether this has anything to do with the defence of Le Mans, or is merely some private operation on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities, I hardly care, after my morning's experience, to ask. The gendarmes in garrison here have all turned out, and are pacing the streets in pairs, carbine in hand, for the first time since I have been here, which shows that something serious is in the wind. Men and women are standing in groups at all the corners. Whatever may have occurred, it has come to pass suddenly, for this morning at ten o'clock everything was quiet. Ten thousand men from Laval have gone to the front during to-day.

8 o'clock.—News at last. A wounded soldier has just come in, and an officer who brings news that the fighting is at Ivray and Artenay, but the result is undecided. It seems the Prussians drove us back yesterday a little, and that we are trying to retake the positions we lost. We have three divisions engaged. The 16th, 17th, and 21st Corps and over three hundred guns are massing in front of Le Mans.

Jan. 14.—Le Mans to-day is in a state of indescribable excitement. The Prussian troops have mostly quitted the town, though Prince Frederick Charles is still established in the Préfecture, and cannon-firing is audible, apparently from the direction of Conlie. When one adds to this the fact of rumours flying about to the effect that both Arras and Paris have capitulated; that Chanzy has despatched two *parlementaires* with full powers to treat for the unconditional surrender of his entire army; that Bourbaki's forces have been cut to pieces; and that Gambetta has been assassinated, it may be well conceived that the unhappy Manceaux are in a state of mental confusion. To add to this, the Maire of the town has departed for regions unknown, leaving his hapless *concitoyens* to arrange the little matter of enforced contributions as best they can. The small sum of four millions of francs has been demanded from them, with sundry dark hints as to requisitions in kind to follow. Individually, however, they seem to accept matters with a certain amount of tranquillity. The Prussians are there, and the principle that what cannot be cured had better be endured seems to prevail.

As far as I have seen, these much-dreaded invaders seem to behave in a decent manner as a rule. Some of them certainly do suffer from slight mental aberration respecting the rights of private property; and one of their prevailing ideas undoubtedly is that the price of a pound

of tobacco varies between twenty and thirty sous; but as far as general conduct goes they are quiet and orderly enough. My barber, who has fifteen of them quartered upon him, and who accepts their presence as one of the *malheurs de la guerre*, assured me this morning that they don't do much damage, but at the same time mildly lamented their occupation of his bedchamber, he having thereby been forced to take up his sleeping quarters under his counter. One class of the inhabitants have certainly profited by their presence to a considerable extent, and these are the restaurateurs. The Prussian officer feeds well, drinks deep, and pays on the nail in bright silver thalers, yellow Fredericks, or crisp pink bank-paper. The *traiteurs* have accordingly been reaping a superb harvest; but the proverb that one can have too much of a good thing will, I fear, hold good in this case also; for, owing to this influx of customers, there is now hardly anything eatable to be obtained at their establishments. Indeed, if a famine is not to be feared, there is at any rate a dearth of various articles of daily consumption. Coffee is no longer to be obtained at many of the *cafés*, and sugar threatens to become a thing of the past. The shop shutters are all closed, but the inhabitants have mostly emerged from their seclusion, and go as quietly about their daily affairs as if the *hordes barbares*, which their journals have been denouncing for months past, were still miles away. The said hordes I have before mentioned have considerably diminished in number since yesterday; but it is impossible to learn in what direction they have advanced, and whether the firing we have heard to-day implies that they have come up with Chanzy's main body, or with a detached corps. The Prussians are as close as oysters, and where a French officer would in reply to a question either amiably prevaricate, or invent some convenient fiction to justify

his unwillingness to reply to your question, they merely relapse into a state of silent dignity, which strikes the bold inquirer dumb with awe. The combination of beard and spectacles with which most of their faces are adorned lends them a most doctorial air, and irresistibly recalls to one's mind the days when one was under the rule of the pedagogue.

As to the men, it is impossible not to add one's unit to the universal testimony as to their excellence. The infantry, careless enough in their ordinary appearance, but smart and serviceable when in marching order, and the stalwart cavalry, upon their clean-limbed powerful horses, offer a most striking contrast to the wretchedly clad and vilely shod Mobiles, and the untidy, careless-looking horsemen, and their drooping-headed Rosinantes, of the French army. With all my sympathies upon the latter side, this fact is one which I cannot but admit.

Rennes, Jan. 21.—I have not yet been able to leave for Laval, but I think there is no desperate hurry, for it appears the enemy will not interfere with De Chanzy; and it will be some days certainly before he can do anything. He has to re-form an army. He needs horses most terribly. He also wants arms. Half, or at least a third, of the horses of his cavalry have either died of fatigue and privations and cold, or been killed. All the regular troops that had come here in a disbanded state are being sent back to him, but the Mobiles and Mobilisés are being sent away, I believe to their respective departments—but at any rate into Lower Brittany. The Pontifical Zouaves are here; they have suffered most terribly, and are getting up their force. Great numbers of young men are volunteering for that corps. They say 300 have volunteered since they arrived here on Tuesday last. They drill every day, although they are the only really well-drilled troops in the whole army. At

one of the first encounters before Le Mans their almoner, or chaplain, was taken prisoner, and a young priest from Le Mans, who had a brother a Zouave in the corps, requested the honour of the vacant post, and of ministering to the dying and wounded during the action. He was killed in the last battle while fulfilling his ministry.

The *Courrier de Rennes*, a weekly paper, tells us to-day we should not forget, in these times of humiliation, of mourning, and of expiation, that it is just seventy-seven years ago, on this very day, the 21st of January, that one of the most virtuous and wise kings who have ever honoured the throne of France—a worthy son of St. Louis—perished on the scaffold, the victim of those men whose tyranny covered their country with blood and ruins before they themselves bent down servilely under the yoke of Napoleon the First. It goes on to ask why, after such a lesson, Frenchmen have, for the last half-century, been carried away by every revolutionary wind that has blown, &c. The reason it gives is, that France had ignored its Christian mission. Seduced by false men of learning, by immoral and infidel literary men, like Rousseau and Voltaire, she has ever since been trying to build up a social edifice, the basis of which was not respect for God and the Decalogue. The word of the Gospel had come to pass; the house which God had not built had crumbled into the sand, notwithstanding all the vain efforts of man.

There is no news whatever to-day, excepting that we hear again that Faidherbe has won a victory, but nevertheless has retreated, leaving St. Quentin in the hands of the enemy. That despatch does not look at all well, and people are not so blind that they do not see through its want of candour.

The *Journal d'Ille-et-Vilaine* gives us a long despatch which was sent by M. Gambetta to M. Jules Favre on

the 31st of December, in which he says, that "It is evident to us and to the whole of Europe that our chances of success are increasing every day, whereas they decrease with our enemies. . . . France is quite transformed; the spirit of Paris has been breathed upon her, and has transfigured her; and if Paris were to fall, a cry of vengeance would come from every mouth. But she will not fall. . . . Public spirit is completely for war. . . . France is becoming more and more attached to the Republican system," &c.

The man must either deceive himself outrageously, or he must wish to deceive others. Why, in the railway carriage I came in here the other night, and in which there were about forty people pent up, I heard such conversation as this among soldiers:—"That Gambetta's the cause of all this useless loss of life."—"Yes," says another; "he thinks he will disappear when it becomes too hot for him; but he should not if I were anywhere near him," &c. When somebody proposed a song to while away the time, a voice suggested with a sneer the "Marseillaise," but that suggestion brought on a storm of groans and hisses. Nobody but the immediate creatures of Gambetta are for this present form of Government—i.e. M. Gambetta, Dictateur. Nobody will stand that much longer, I am convinced; but I think there are not great multitudes for a Republic of any kind. There is not a Préfecture or a Sous-préfecture—there is not a single place which has not been filled by some unknown journalist, or some talking lawyer, whose only claim is that they have been waiting in anxious idleness and poverty for the day when they might divide the spoil between them. That is the opinion of people in France. Ask any Franc-tireur; he will tell you what the country people think of the war, and of M. Gambetta's Republic. They betray the

French to the Prussians whenever they have a chance; and that is the case almost all over the seat of war. Then compare that fact with M. Gambetta's assertions.

The regret with which France had heard of the signal defeat of General Chanzy was soon tempered by good tidings from the Army of the North. On the 18th of January a despatch from General Faidherbe was published, stating that "having learnt that the Prussians at St. Quentin demanded of the inhabitants a sum of 548,000*fr.*, he had resolved to put an end to their exactions, and sent a flying column for that purpose under the orders of Colonel Isnard. That officer encountered the enemy at Catele Bellicourt and pursued him, killing and wounding thirty men. Colonel Isnard subsequently entered St. Quentin on the 16th. The enemy fled in great disorder, abandoning 130 prisoners as well as a considerable store of provisions. The inhabitants of the town received the troops with enthusiasm." In an unofficial despatch from Lille it was said that "the Germans evacuated the town in disorder, leaving French prisoners, baggage, and two guns behind." But three days afterwards Faidherbe fought a disastrous battle with Von Göben at St. Quentin, described in the following letter from the Correspondent with the German commander, dated St. Quentin, January 20:—

Long before this letter is in your hands the great victory of yesterday over the army of General Faidherbe will be known to you. I informed you in my letter of the 18th that, after the battle at Beauvois, the bulk of the Army of the North entered St. Quentin, whilst the rear guard had taken refuge at Cambrai. Whether a junction took place during the night, I cannot say; but it is certain that the troops which had been quartered at St. Quentin previous to the battle, together with those who entered that place before yesterday, constituted a con-

siderable force, ready again to encounter the Prussians.

General von Göben, on his part, gave strict orders to attack the enemy early in the morning, at or before St. Quentin, and not to desist until the said enemy was beaten. I happened to see a friend, who is the commander of a regiment, holding the *ordre de bataille* in his hand, and admiring it as a masterpiece of strategy. "This is Göben," said he; "I know him well from 1866, when he was operating against the so-called South Army. The peculiarity of his disposition is the great exactness with which care is taken of all parts; none being neglected; each working for itself for a certain time, and scarcely knowing it is connected with a neighbor until the time comes when all act together as a whole. He cares comparatively little how many men perish on the march so long as the march is completed in the given time. And you will see to-day," my friend added, "the results he obtains. You will particularly notice that everybody will be not only in his right place, but also in due time." For the sake of explanation, I must state that very many officers of this army attribute to Manteuffel's slowness the fact of Faidherb not having been beaten in a more decided manner on previous occasions. The confidence of the ordinary soldier in Von Göben's talent is striking. On the march through snow and mud, from morning till evening, you can often hear these tired fellows say, "Well, Göben knows that all this is necessary," and continue as jolly as ever. We had to rise yesterday as early as five o'clock in the morning, when Beauvois was still in a blaze. Being still dark, and having other troops marching before us, we could advance but slowly. When day broke we were before Savy, a small village south of St. Quentin. The left wing of the French army was already engaged with the 16th Division, the latter coming from Ham. The

unceasing fire of the French rifles—always pointed out to the Germans by their officers as squandering ammunition—was not to be mistaken. Now the position of the French could pretty distinctly be made out. A better one could not be desired. To fully appreciate it you must picture St. Quentin situated within a hollow, enclosed by hills, which hilly circle is separated by a valley from a second similar circumvallation. Eastward of this natural fortress, about five thousand paces from the second height, between St. Quentin and Savy, is a thick forest of considerable length, separated by a plain of about five hundred paces from a second forest, less extensive than the former, still more westward, towards the road to Péronne, near Vermand. The French army was so posted on the second height as to have its left wing eastward of St. Quentin, the right beyond the second forest, and the bulk behind both forests, the forests being lined with soldiers. Two batteries were, in a masterly fashion, placed behind the height separating the two forests, so as to be entirely concealed, their existence merely being known by the smoke after the discharge. On our side there was the 16th Division on the right; the 3rd cavalry Division on the left wing; the 15th Division in the centre. The respective batteries were with their divisions, and the artillery corps kept in reserve. Altogether we had 35,000 men. As far as I could learn from French prisoners, the army of General Faidherbe, reinforced at St. Quentin, numbered no less than 65,000. The proportion of the French and Germans was more than two to one.

At Savy orders were given to the infantry to take the forests, and to help them three batteries were mounted near the windmill behind Savy, which threw their shells partly into the forests, and partly amidst those troops who were posted on the height

connecting them. The French batteries likewise began to roar from behind the hill, and aimed well. I attempted to follow the infantry, but so wide is the range of the Chassepôts, that at a distance of 1,000 yards, where we began to advance, we had already several wounded. The French rifles are, in fact, feared by the Prussians at long distances, whilst the danger decreases in direct ratio as the distance becomes shorter. In other words, at the range of about 1,500 or 2,000 paces and more, no Prussian would dream of discharging his rifle; and thus he stands, as it were, at the mercy of his enemy, who by frequently firing makes up for the indifference of his aim. Listening, therefore, for a time to the peculiar music of the French bullets and grenades, I turned my horse round, and witnessed one of the finest and most gallant cavalry attacks I have ever seen. Immediately behind Savy several squadrons of French dragoons were drawn up in line against about an equal number of the King's Hussars. The former were extremely nice and clean; their horses well tended; saddles and bridles apparently a few days only in use; their white cloaks as if put on for the occasion. The hussars, on the other hand, as well as their horses, were covered with mud; their uniforms, usually so neat and shiny, were all soiled from the long and toilsome marches of the last few days. I was just instituting the comparison, when the hussars, like lightning, dashed forward against the enemy, and overrode him in a pitiful manner. The first shock dismounted half of the French dragoons; their white cloaks covered the ground, or were trodden into the earth; whilst those who remained on their horses fell under the heavy strokes of the hussars' sharp sabres, or were made prisoners. When brought in I conversed with some of them, and learned that they had entered the army only three weeks before,

and that previously to that time they had never been on a horse's back.

It was noon, and our artillery having no means of estimating the effect of their shells on the concealed batteries of the enemy, left off firing. They resumed it only when the French batteries had changed their front towards their right flank, probably pressed very hard by our 3rd cavalry Division, and continued and compelled the enemy to give up that excellent position. The forests were already in possession of our infantry. Two light and one heavy battery advanced in columns at about three o'clock in the direction of St. Quentin, leaving the first forest to their left. Before that forest they were drawn up in line against the artillery of the enemy, who, being in retreat, had taken position on the first height around St. Quentin. Nearly at the same time four batteries of the artillery corps were summoned to the battle-field, and placed themselves at the right of the former batteries. Thus on the west side of St. Quentin seven batteries came into action, and the terrible grandeur of their roaring, and the whistling of their shells, were indescribable. The cavalry Division continued to exercise the utmost pressure on the enemy's right, as the 16th Division did on his left, and thus he had no other course but to abandon also the last heights and to fall back into the town. One of the grandest war-pictures ever witnessed was now displayed. The full light of day had already disappeared; the wide plain on which the fiercest of battles had raged was silent; but on the right and left wing the cries of victorious troops were heard. When the enemy was driven from his last position the whole long line of infantry and cavalry, followed by the artillery, began to march on St. Quentin, drums beating, banners fluttering in the air; and, amidst the shouts of "hurrah!" advanced

until they had reached the height just abandoned by the enemy. The batteries were mounted in a semicircle around the town, which the 15th Division now took by storm, assisted by the 16th Division, which attacked the east of the town. The enemy was no longer able to resist, and made his escape as well as he could. The army being routed, some went to Cambrai, others are said to have gone to Guise. The cavalry Division, on their advance in the afternoon, made 4,000 prisoners, and at St. Quentin about an equal number were taken. Up to the present time 11,000 prisoners are in our hands, and smaller detachments are being constantly brought in by the patrols. Had the night not prevented the artillery from continuing their work, it would have been impossible for any French soldier to escape. Where General Faidherbe is gone is not yet known; still less what movements he contemplates after the disasters of yesterday.

The Special Correspondent at Douai wrote on the 21st concerning the result of this battle:—

The blow which the silent anxieties of those most interested have for days foreboded has at length fallen on the North, in the decisive defeat at St. Quentin of General Faidherbe's army. His defeat may not have been a rout; but for all practical purposes the result is the same. The strength of the army is, speaking numerically, impaired at least one-third by men who have become prisoners or vanished, their leaders and comrades know not whither. This is independent of killed and wounded. The remainder are being forced on from Cambrai, which was the first point made for, to the fortresses a little farther off, Arras and here, whence considerable numbers are being drafted off to Lille, and probably to St. Omer, for reconstruction. Thus what was a few days ago at least a compact body,

flushed with a certain success, is to-day being scattered among the northern towns. At this moment the men are arriving here in large numbers, with a considerable quantity of artillery, it being presumed that if Cambrai is not invested or taken already, it will be in the course of the day.

The fighting commenced by some skirmishes on Wednesday, the 18th instant. On the previous day General Faidherbe had established his quartier-général at St. Quentin, and early the following morning despatched a brigade of the 22nd Corps d'Armée in advance of the main army, which shortly after followed, in a southerly direction towards Mézières on the Oise. General Faidherbe being practically utterly deficient in cavalry, his reconnaissances were too limited to enable him to know for certain the direction occupied by the enemy; consequently a portion of his men came unexpectedly upon their advanced posts near the village of Roupy; and at Vaux the 43rd Regiment of the Line and the 20th Battalion of Chasseurs were suddenly and violently attacked by a Prussian battery. They lost five officers and over a hundred men. Orders were given to a portion of the 23rd Corps d'Armée, which it must be remembered is mainly composed of Mobilisés as opposed to the 22nd Corps d'Armée made up of Line soldiers and Marines, but they arrived too late to be of service. On the 19th the main battle commenced, at nine o'clock in the morning, by an attack from the Prussians, who occupied some heights overlooking the villages of Grugis and Castres, occupied by the 2nd Division of the 23rd Corps d'Armée, and commanded by General Gislin. By ten o'clock the French were obliged to abandon their positions, and a powerful attack was made on their whole lines by the Prussians with an immense artillery force. The struggle continued till two o'clock, at which

hour some French officers assert the Prussian lines were giving way before the 22nd Corps d'Armée, though at the same time the 23rd Corps d'Armée had then lost much ground. The two corps had unhappily become separated by the canal Crozat, too broad and deep to be crossed but by bridges, and were consequently unable to be of use to each other. It was, therefore, soon seen that the 23rd Corps d'Armée (composed, as I said before, chiefly of Mobilisés) began to yield visibly, and by three o'clock had retreated, certainly not in good order—in fact, “ran away” would be the more correct definition for those who had not become prisoners. General Faidherbe endeavoured, but ineffectually, to restore confidence by directing some battalions of the 22nd Corps d'Armée to go to their aid; but before this movement could be accomplished the panic was too great. From this time the 22nd Corps d'Armée, under Generals Derojà and Paulze d'Ivoy, sustained the whole of the fight. Even among these troops some Mobiles gave way, but were again rallied and placed in front of the regiment of Zouaves of the North. These latter are as fine a body of young dare-devils as the French possess. However, by four o'clock General Paulze d'Ivoy, seeing the impossibility of defending further, the retreat was sounded, and under the continual fire of the enemy St. Quentin was again reached, but only *en route* for a farther distance still; for, determined to repossess the town they had evacuated three days before, the Prussians not only fired upon the troops entering, but sent some shells into it. Thus, when night was falling, the weary men—almost dead with several days' marching to and fro, first upon Albert, next tacking westward upon Fins—were trudging several kilomètres in the dreary darkness to Cambrai, knowing they had lost an important day, and that their conquerors were occupying the

town they held the night before. Very few wounded have been able to be brought forward, the majority having fallen into the hands of the enemy. Of the numbers of killed and wounded on either side, it would be simply misleading to name any number whatever. They are entirely unknown. What is better known are those that are "missing" on the French side. These are so enormous, compared to the numbers engaged, that it can only be assumed that either prisoners have been made *en masse*, or that immense numbers have simply run away as fast and as far as their legs will carry them. Incredible as it may appear, large numbers of these poor fellows have been obliged to march and fight with bare feet, their shoes, so bad in the first instance, having collapsed. I see now many limping through the street with nothing but a piece of the under sole strapped on (God knows how), and their feet naked, or only covered with a ragged sock. Can any people expect men of the calibre Frenchmen are to fight under such circumstances?

Thus, within ten days, a second French army, upon which high hopes had been built, was disposed of. In a report to the Minister of War, General Faidherbe stated that at this battle he had only 25,000 combatants, his four divisions having been reduced during six weeks' operations to 6,000 or 7,000 men each; and that he had gone forward, certain of meeting an overwhelming force, in order to assist the sortie from Paris, by the sacrifice of his own army. If the Army of the North was indeed reduced to a strength of 25,000 men, France and Paris, which had been led to believe that it had three or four times that number, had been shamefully deceived. In connection with this battle, one fact recorded by the Special Correspondent before Paris with the Saxons deserves notice. Writing on the 21st, he said:—

It seems to me that the whole war hardly affords a more striking example of the military genius of Von Moltke than the opportune railway trip he ordered for the 16th Brigade, forming part of the beleaguering army. Calculation had furnished him with evidence that Von Göben would make his mark at St. Quentin all the deeper if he were strengthened with 4,000 or 5,000 men and a few guns; calculation and good information told him the hour at which this help would be good at need. The brigade quietly went away for the fight just as a lawyer goes down to Reading or Gloucester for the circuit; and, the work done, it comes back to its quarters before Paris just as the lawyer comes back to his cases in the Court of Queen's Bench. This device has simply for the time converted 5,000 men into 10,000 men. Napoleon I. was, perhaps, the greatest utilizer of his soldiery by means of rapid movements of all Von Moltke's predecessors; but, then, Napoleon had not the locomotive and the *militär-Zug*. Dense as the population of France may be, the terrible and continuous drain as prisoners of what are nominally at least fighting men must be sorely felt.

CHAPTER XXI.

By the middle of January all the armies which were to have saved Paris had failed; the resisting power of the people themselves was rapidly wasting away, and it was necessary for the Government of National Defence to form a critical resolution. The newspapers severely blamed the inactivity of the Government. General Trochu was especially marked out for animadversion, his "plan" was ridiculed, his sorties were called "platonic," and his removal was called for. To diminish his responsibility and increase the confidence of the public, the Government had summoned a Council of War, under the presidency of the Governor of Paris, and composed of the generals of the three armies of the capital, the admirals commanding the forts, and the generals at the head of the artillery and engineers, and it was announced that measures had been adopted to unite the National Guard, the Mobile Guard, and the army for the most active defence. But the time had passed when the people could be satisfied with words, however plausible; and besides, the Government could no more afford to wait than the people. General Trochu had said that "the Governor would never capitulate." There was nothing left, then, but to make one more sortie, which it was well understood would be the last supreme effort of the defenders of Paris. On the 19th of January the *ausfall* was made from Mont Valérien, and with 100,000 men. The army was composed

of three main columns, each consisting of troops of the Line, Gardes Mobiles, and Mobilised National Guards, formed in brigades. The column of the left, under the command of General Vinoy, was ordered to carry the redoubt at Montretout and the villas of Bearn, Pozzo di Borgo, Armagand, and Ermenonville; the centre, under General Bellemarre, was to proceed to the east of the Bergerie. The column of the right, commanded by General Ducrot, was to operate against the west of the park of Buzenval. All the communications leading to the peninsula of Gennevilliers, including the railways, were employed for the concentration of these large forces; and as the attack was to take place early in the morning, the right, which had a long distance to move (seven miles), in the middle of the night, on a defective line of railway, and on a road encumbered by a column of artillery which had lost its way, was only able to reach its rallying point after the attack had commenced in the left and centre. By 11 A.M. the redoubt at Montretout and the villas had been taken by Vinoy's troops. General Bellemarre had arrived at the summit of the Bergerie after having occupied the Maison du Curé. But while waiting for the support of the right he had to bring up a portion of his reserve in order to maintain his position. In the meantime General Ducrot's column came into line. His right, established at Reuil, was cannonaded by formidable batteries on the other side of the Seine, which were replied to by the artillery at General Ducrot's disposal and by Mont Valérien. The engagement was carried on briskly at the Gate of Longboyen, where a desperate resistance was encountered from behind walls and loopholed houses which skirt the park. General Ducrot repeatedly led the troops of the Line and the National Guard on to the attack without being able to gain ground. Between three and four o'clock a fresh offensive movement of the Germans between the centre

and left of the French position, and carried out with great energy, caused the French to fall back. A little later they moved forward again, and the summit of the plateau was once more recaptured; but night set in, and it was impossible to bring up artillery to take firm possession of the position; and the French troops, fatigued by twelve hours' fighting, and by the marching on the preceding nights, were ordered to retreat. At six o'clock in the evening, M. Jules Favre publishes the following bulletin from General Trochu:—

“The battle engaged in advance of Mont Valérien has lasted since morning. The engagement extends from Montretout to the left of the ravine of Celle, St. Cloud to the right. Three corps of the army, forming more than 100,000 men, and provided with a formidable artillery, are struggling with the enemy. General Vinoy to the left holds Montretout, and is fighting. At Garches, Generals Bellemarre and Ducrot have attacked the platform of La Bergerie, and have been fighting for some hours at the Château de Buzenval. The troops have shown the most brilliant courage, and the Mobilised National Guards have displayed as much firmness as patriotic ardour. The Governor Commander-in-Chief does not know as yet the definitive result of the day. As soon as the Government shall have received information, it will be communicated to the population of Paris.”

This intelligence was received in Paris with the liveliest satisfaction. All day long the streets had been filled with people waiting for the news of victory. At half-past nine the following bulletin was issued, but probably two-thirds of the population only heard of it on the following morning:—

“Our enterprise, which commenced so happily, has not

had the issue that we might have hoped. The enemy, whom we surprised this morning by the suddenness of our attack, brought against us towards the latter part of the day immense masses of artillery, with infantry of reserve. About three o'clock our left, strongly attacked, gave way. I thought proper, after having ordered every one to remain firm, to go personally to the left, and after a time we resumed the offensive; but night coming on, and the fire of the enemy continuing with great violence, our columns were obliged to retire from the heights, which they had escalated in the morning. The best feeling has not ceased to animate the National Guards and the troops, who showed great courage and energy in the long and terrible struggle. I do not as yet know our loss. From the prisoners I learn that that of the enemy was very considerable. (Signed) TROCHU."

The Correspondent at the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia wrote, on the 20th, from Versailles:—

The sortie from Mont Valérien yesterday was an effort difficult to explain, save by reasons other than strategic. General Trochu could have hoped to do but little against the strong German force in this quarter without bringing up all his strength and pushing madly on. Now he did neither one thing nor the other, and we can only suppose that he was urged in Paris to fight a battle towards Versailles, and fought one accordingly, to encourage the people to hold out bravely against hunger. The French made a great demonstration and little more, though they incurred considerable loss in so doing, especially on the left of their line.

The best view that could be had of Thursday's fighting was from a field-work on the German right, whence Montretout was distinctly to be seen. There were the 4-pounder guns, so light but so deadly in effect, un-

limbered and pointed at the French. There were the artillery horses standing patiently in the mud behind the battery, indifferent to sudden noise, and biting at the withered leaves on the bushes instead of listening to the shells which flew overhead. The gunners were at their post, ready to fire at a moment's notice, and a group of staff officers had gathered in the most convenient spot for looking from the fieldwork towards Montretout. So long as the guns on this side kept quiet it was likely that the enemy's cannon would send only stray shells here and there against the hill-top. But Chasse-pôt bullets were more plentiful, and without drawing anybody's fire in particular, the battery of which I speak might get more than enough of these small whistling visitors. Even whilst we strained our eyes to catch a glimpse of the French and German troops a little farther forward, and marked how the thin film of bluish smoke and the crackling line of infantry advanced or receded, an artilleryman in the battery fell wounded by a Chasse-pôt bullet, close to where the staff officers had gathered. Those French rifles have a long range, and it is well to beware of them. See the gallant old colonel of artillery who steps up to the Crown Prince to report what has happened. The report is meant, I doubt not, to suggest a change of position. But the fight on yonder sloping ground has intense interest for the commander of the besieging army. His Highness stands fast, and looks eagerly across the intervening fields. There they come—there come the enemy several yards forward, and the thin bluish smoke is in two very distinct lines now, with a steady crackling beneath it which seems never to flag. Well done both sides! They keep it up like men. The lines of smoke have a deadly meaning, for many of the advancing French roll upon the ground, and some Germans also seem to be hurt. Well done both sides! The

sharp crackling fire would wring the hearts of those at home if they could hear it. How steadily the Germans hold their own! If they are doing as well all along the front, there need be no anxiety for the result. Yet for a moment they are borne back. The French gain another strip a few yards in width, and come more fully into view. Their supports seem to have descended from the crest of the ridge behind Montretout, and to be following them on to the sloping fields straight before us. It is a fair chance for the Prussian guns. The battery where we stand opens fire with deliberate aim. "Now to the right!" "Now to the left!" "Let them have it a little higher!" We can hear the orders given, and see the neat working of the fatal tubes. Four gunners are busied with each, and the cartridges, which with cannon of this size are a mere trifle to handle, are slipped in at the breech like pills into a pill-box. Bang! Bang! How sharply they tingle on the ears! There go the shells to the sloping fields across the valley, where the French advance. They cause some confusion, and have an evident effect in checking the forward movement. We can perceive that several of the enemy's skirmishers have run back to the main body. As evening approaches, the lines of bluish smoke are less clear than the flashes of the rifles. But it is not dark enough yet to lose sight of the men who fire. The flashes are twinkling along the crest of the ridge and down on the fields below. We can now see gleams of light from French and German cannon to our right front. Some heavy shells fly very near us, and burst with a shattering disagreeable sound. They are not well aimed, though things begin to look as if this active battery where we stand had drawn too much attention to itself. Bang! bang! from the sharp-voiced, toy-like four-pounders. Every shot they make is of service to the infantry below. The

French have ceased to advance; nay more, they have given ground for many yards, and are farther back than they were at first. The flashes grow brighter, and the forms of the men less easy to distinguish. Another and another heavy shell screams up from the French position in rear of the fighting, and seem more clearly than ever destined for these troublesome field-pieces. Messengers have ridden to and fro between the Crown Prince's staff and the troops engaged. One officer has galloped away to order up a fresh battalion. Another has come with news that the advanced line is keeping its assailants back. Horses have plunged and kicked and fidged round and round in rear of the battery, for they are not all such quiet steeds as those harnessed to the limbers. There has been too much interest in the work going on before us for any one to think of the shells which scream up from below, until they grow so persistent in their visits that they are not to be neglected. A shell bursts just in front of the battery, and throws up the mud high in air. It does no harm, but its arrival causes some remark to be made to the Prince. His Highness is urged to shift his position, at least to one side, now that the field-pieces have drawn the enemy's fire; and, without mounting his horse, which is led round in the rear, he walks leisurely past the left of the battery to a spot where a line of infantry is sheltered behind a wall. For a little while longer the Prince lingers in sight of the nimble gunners, until darkness has so far prevailed that there is scarcely anything to be seen but the bright flash at each discharge. The fight is less hotly maintained below; the French have seemingly lost heart, and there is no further advance on their part. It has been as stirring an hour's work as one can often have the chance to see. Montretout was retaken late that night with but slight

loss to the Germans, and but slight resistance by the French; and it appeared that after their failure to get forward in the struggle on the 19th itself, these last did not care to hold an exposed position in face of the German field-guns. I heard that the French regiments returned into Paris, with their bands playing, early yesterday. The prisoners whom I saw seemed well fed, though I only saw a few close up.

Another Correspondent wrote:—

I got a capital view of the sortie from the Terrace of St. Germain, where I arrived about noon, having received no intimation before leaving Versailles that any fighting was taking place. On the roof of the Pavilion of Henri IV.—the Star and Garter of the environs of Paris, the highest point in the vicinity—is erected a look-out place, fitted with a most powerful telescope. Through this instrument the French were descried, soon after 8 A.M., issuing from Valérien and pouring down the slopes. The alarm was instantly given, and intimation of the impending attack telegraphed to Versailles, where, I dare say, the world at head-quarters was somewhat rudely startled out of slumbers succeeding the festivities of the King's birthday. Without waiting to get their coffee, each man only sticking a piece of bread into his knapsack, two battalions of the Garde-Landwehr, which garrison St. Germain, were hurriedly pushed through the railway tunnel across the still intact, though undermined, railway bridge, across the Vesinet, to Châton on the Seine, exactly opposite St. Germain. From Châton, where the Seine used to be crossed by a bridge, interrupted by the island in the bed of the river, the road to the left leads to Nanterre, that to the right to the Reuil. The engagement, which began about 9 A.M., was apparently at its hottest between twelve and three. Towards

3 P.M., I borrowed a field-glass from some most obliging Landwehr officers, who explained to me the movements of the hostile forces. Right in front of us, with two bends of the Seine, including the dead flat plain of the Vesinet between us and him, stood Mont Valérien, isolated with a broad base, and, Vesuvius-like, now belching out fire from his summit, now from his sides. For half-way up his slopes are strong redoubts, one facing north-west, others facing south-west and south. Just over the left shoulder of Valérien I could clearly make out the broad top of the Arc de Triomphe, and away to the north, across the plain, loomed the towers of St. Denis—destined, as I am informed, to an early bombardment. The horizon on the left was bounded by the heights of Montmorency. To the right, following the windings of the Seine at our feet, were stretched out the picturesque line of heights which extend from St. Germain to Sèvres, Meudon, and Clamart, broken into transverse ridges by the lateral valleys which debouch into the Seine at Port Marly, Bougival, St. Cloud, and Sèvres. From the German batteries, established all along these heights, a very lively fire was kept up all day, replying to the cannonade from the southern redoubts of Valérien and the French field-batteries, which seemed to maintain a very steady fire, and to be advancing gradually towards the heights of Montretout, above St. Cloud, which they are reported to have finally carried. To create a diversion in the rear of the main French advance, which was directed to the southward, against the 5th and 6th Prussian Corps d'Armée, with some Bavarians between them, orders were sent to the 4th Corps d'Armée to advance from the north. This movement I could observe very distinctly, especially the period when the advancing field-batteries of the 4th Corps were hotly engaged with the redoubt of Valérien facing

north-west, which had to be silenced before the 4th Corps could get past to take the main French advance in the rear. What the result of the episode may have been I am unable to state. About 4 P.M. the fire slackened a good deal all along the line, and the weather, which had been clear since mid-day, became rather thick and foggy; but we could still see the flashes and hear the occasional discharges of artillery, which continued long after nightfall. From the terrace I watched the bivouac fires of the two armies, and went to bed in the full anticipation of a renewal of the engagement on the morrow. The affair, however, was decided the same evening by the driving back of the French from the heights of Montretout.

On the 23rd, by which time the real extent of the battle of the 19th had been better ascertained, the Correspondent at the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia wrote:—

We have found that the French loss was heavier than was at first supposed, and there is reason to believe that, desperate as their chance of success must have appeared, the officers who led the sortie were bent upon striking a blow at the German head-quarters. General Trochu is said to have been present himself, and to have risked his life freely to encourage the men. All the means of attack which modern science supplies, and which are possessed by the French in Paris, were called into requisition. The gunboats on the Seine steamed boldly into action, and kept up a galling fire against the German right, which was established in the park of St. Cloud. The railway mitrailleuse batteries came out on the St. Germain line, under the protection of Mont Valérien, and attacked such of the besieging troops as it seemed likely that they could reach, though I do not think they were able to keep up more than a

distant fire upon the Prussian left. Field artillery and great guns in position were freely used to support the sortie, the heavier pieces sending up their shells from the works near Billancourt and Boulogne. It was altogether a well-supported attempt to make such progress in the first rush of the affair as would pave the way for an advance upon Versailles; and at Montretout, where the French really succeeded in gaining ground, there seemed to be a plan of permanently occupying the spot so long debated between besiegers and besieged. Throughout the day the French held Montretout, and they penetrated some little distance on the German side of the work. Even when the gallant Von Strautz, with his Jägers, supported by infantry of the Line, had recaptured the bone of contention on the hill-top, and thrown back the French with loss upon Suresnes, there remained that body of three or four hundred Mobiles, of which I have already told you, concealed in the village of St. Cloud, cut off, as would appear, by the failure of their friends to support them; and these Mobiles were taken by the indefatigable Prussian Jägers long after the whole matter of the sortie was thought to have been laid to rest. I have heard that the French were considered to have fought better than usual for the first part of their attack, as though they had nerved themselves up to strike a decided blow; but in the afternoon of Thursday, when I had a good opportunity of seeing for myself what occurred, the most that could be said was that they stood their ground, and kept up a brisk fire, with but faint symptoms of pressing forward, and with seemingly no hope of being able to make their way into the German lines. The practice of the French field-artillery is said to have been magnificent at one or two points, and that of the German field-batteries was quite up to its usual mark, as I can vouch

from what I saw; but neither on one side nor the other was the small-arm fire so deadly as might have been expected from the persistent way in which it was sustained. The French were most exposed, and lost many more men than their opponents, perhaps four or five times as many; but the great loss to besiegers and besieged alike was caused by artillery fire.

Without any formal armistice, there was a partial cessation of hostilities in the front, towards Mont Valérien, to allow of the picking up of the wounded and the burial of the dead. I was told by an officer who had been present during this truce of grim necessity, that the French seemed anxious to remove many of the bodies for interment by their friends within the city; and it was therefore supposed that a certain number of Parisian National Guards of the better class had been mixed with the Mobiles and the Line troops for the purpose of the sortie. The French, who came with ambulance waggons to remove the wounded and collect the dead, were shocked at the loss which they found that their army had suffered. They spoke of having counted as many as forty-seven dead officers in the line of the attack, and said that it was no wonder, for the leaders had exposed themselves to get the troops forward. Trochu was among the foremost for several hours, and an aide-de-camp was shot close by him, not twenty paces in rear of the line of skirmishers.

This sortie, the third great effort of the siege, was all-important to Paris, but did not greatly impress the besiegers, whose earliest despatches greatly understated the number of French engaged. The Correspondent with the Crown Prince of Saxony wrote on the 19th:—

No part of the Maas army was engaged to-day, with the exception of the artillery division of the 4th Army

Corps, generally quartered in Sannois. The batteries to the northward of Valérien, at Nanterre, Courbevoie, &c., and the big fort itself, became eruptive about lunch-time; and it soon transpired that they were firing to cover the advance of French infantry. The columns of these headed for Reuil, and coalescing with troops that had come down from Valérien and round its southern shoulder, struck out for Bougival, their front covered by skirmishers, and the batteries firing furiously over their heads. I believe the attack extended all the way round to the front of the German batteries at St. Cloud, and a contingent was detailed to threaten Châton. On a splendid position in front of the *carrières* of St. Denis, the artillery of the 4th Army Corps took up its ground, and made brilliant practice in enfilading the French advance on Reuil, as well as in convincing the force that set its face towards Châton that it was not wanted there, and that a strategical movement in the direction of its own rear was an advisable operation. I heard bickers of musketry fire from the direction of Bougival till nigh sundown, but about four o'clock the artillery made the only sound.

It seems clear that the Germans are not filled with deep solicitude as to the last writhings of the captive in their grasp here. Artillery are held to form bonds quite as strong as the infantry grip which so long has held Paris down. In accordance with a policy which I have already ventured to foreshadow, portions of the besieging army are already being spared to co-operate in more active operations elsewhere. Yesterday the 16th Brigade, consisting of the 66th and 86th Regiments, was despatched by railway from Gonesse to St. Quentin, to strengthen the hands of Von Göben. In addition to this exodus, there was a general movement of the troops yesterday on the northern front. Details would be

wearisome, but the general result is what may be termed a bracing up of the inner circle; and the movement has a specific object in view of coming events, which will suggest itself, at all events, to the military reader.

The sortie on the west did not seem in the slightest degree to interrupt the relentless prosecution of the bombardment on the south and south-west. I judge as much by the evidences of firing which were visible from my window in the intervals of the fog and rain. A German journalist who spent the night with me employed one of these intervals in earnestly contemplating Paris through a powerful field-glass, preserving meanwhile a rigid taciturnity. When the prospect once more became obscured, he turned to the fire with the sententious observation, "Dey are getting dare gruel." The phrase smacks of Jemmy Shaw's or Ben Caunt's, at which haunts, I understand, my guest was a frequent visitor during his single short visit to England; but it is very expressive. They are "getting their gruel," these citizens and soldiers in the white city out there to the south; and the man who refused to bear testimony to the enduring constancy and valour with which they are taking the punishment would have claim neither to the title of a truthful reporter, nor to a capacity for some appreciation of a spectacle and an event unique in modern times.

Military writers are busy just now in analyzing the distinctions between an army of the people and a professional army. I saw an incident to-day, trivial in itself, but which to the comprehension of one familiar with the attributes of a professional army, and who has been also for some months studying the workings of a national military system, was not without its significance. In a field I passed a squad of young soldiers who were practising the bayonet exercise: Presently

the drill instructor stood his pupils at ease, whereupon, instead of grounding arms and listlessly waiting for the next "Attention," the squad fell each man to practising industriously the lessons that had just been imparted. There was one young fellow lunging as if he would skewer the garrison of Paris; another preparing to receive cavalry with a pertinacity that must have struck terror into a brigade of horsemen. Then the men took to criticising each other's performances—not chaffingly, but quite seriously, and even anxiously—individual expressions of opinion being, so to speak, illustrated with cuts. Now, is there a drill-sergeant in the British army who can conscientiously assert he ever witnessed a similar "stand-at-ease" episode in any squad he has ever drilled? I have seen in my time a good many squads drilled, but the chief occupation of such intervals I have ever noted to be chewing tobacco, surreptitious attempts at horse-play, and anxious glances at the barrack clock. There is a standing direction to cavalry recruits in our service that they shall take opportunities for practising the sword exercise in their leisure hours. Whoever saw a cavalry recruit fulfilling this injunction? In some barrack-rooms there are masks and single-sticks, but their use is confined to a few who have had some knowledge of cudgel play before enlisting. The Germans cannot touch the French as swordsmen, but both could walk round and laugh at us. An English dragoon can cut the sword exercise without depriving his horse of its head, and about one in every three is tolerably dexterous at "heads and posts," but not one in twenty have any conception of utilizing the sword exercise in actual self-defence. Yet the sword exercise is the mere means to a defensive and offensive end; it is what Euclid is to the practical utilization of the science of geometry.

On the evening of the 19th the King of Prussia telegraphed that the French army still remained outside Paris, and that a renewed attack was expected on the following day. By the middle of the day on the 20th, however, the regiments which had fought on Thursday were marching into Paris. In the evening the newspapers announced that General Trochu had requested an armistice of two days to bury the dead. In the afternoon M. Jules Favre summoned the Mayors to a consultation, and General Trochu also appeared in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for half an hour, and then returned to Valérien. The news of General Chanzy's defeat became known on the same day. The weather was so wet that there were but few groups of people on the boulevards, but at the clubs General Trochu was universally denounced. Almost every one was in despair. The Government, it was said, was preparing the public mind for a capitulation. The next day it was announced that General Trochu had resigned. Vinoy was to command the troops, and the Governorship of Paris was abolished. The German shells continued to fall, but were heeded much less than the future which was visibly lowering upon the city. Between twelve and one on the morning of the 22nd, a band of armed patriots appeared before the prison of Mazas, and demanded the release of Flourens and the political prisoners who were shut up there. The director, instead of keeping the gate shut, allowed a deputation to enter. As soon as the gate was opened, not only the deputation, but the patriots rushed in, and bore off Flourens and his friends in triumph. With the Mayor at their head, they then went to the Mairie of the 20th arrondissement, and pillaged it of all the rations and bread and wine which they found stored up there. Thereupon by order of the Government the clubs were closed, and the *Réveil* and the *Combat* suppressed.

On the 20th, the Special Correspondent at Paris wrote:—

Paris is very uneasy and very unhappy to-night. I do not suppose that the distress will last as long as it ought, for there never was so hopeful, cheerful a race as these Frenchmen. It is not necessary that they should have any reason for the hope which animates them, or, at least, any reason beyond that suggested by history. France must win, because France has won before, and because it is essential to her glory that she should win again. It has been said that hope springs eternal in the human breast; but this is an exaggeration for all save Frenchmen. Their hopefulness is a constant wonder to me; and so it happens that a conjuncture of miseries occurring to-day which would drive an Englishman to despair, will depress the Parisians only for a day or two. If I were writing of other than Frenchmen I should be inclined to say to-night that all is now over. Writing of Frenchmen, I find myself unable to say so. All calculation is made nought by the incalculable element of hope. I have seen these Parisians in a very much worse condition than they are in to-night—all their chances seemed to be destroyed, all hope gone for ever. On the morrow they were merry as grigs—they had still a good many chances—and hope was irrepressible.

What do we find to-night? First of all, that which comes home very bitterly to every Frenchman—the want of bread. But no: I will mention this last, and return to the subject anon. Let me give the first place to the total failure of the third great sortie planned by General Trochu. It is a failure which has taken all Paris by surprise, because from the earlier announcements we were led to expect victory; and it presses on one's spirits heavily, because it appears that General Trochu has demanded, with all urgency, a truce of no less than two days for the burial of the dead and the removal of the wounded. Next, the pigeon of yesterday has brought

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in the news of Chanzy's defeat—a defeat which all the gilding of official circumlocution cannot explain away or turn to advantage. Thirdly, if Bourbaki has been so far successful, it appears that his progress is wondrous slow, so slow that it is not likely to be of much use to Paris. With this heavy load of disaster on his mind, the Parisian sits down to dinner to-day to eat his little dole of sticky, black, bad bread. When I went into the restaurant to dine to-day—it is the best restaurant in Paris just now—the waiter brought me the usual cover; but he said, “Have you brought your bread with you? We have no bread. Since bread is so strictly rationed, all our friends will have to bring their own bread.” I said, “No, I have no bread; I did not know that I was to bring my portion with me; try and get me some for to-day. I shall know better to-morrow.” He brought me a small piece of unwholesome-looking bread, which I could not eat. I happened to be ill, and took a capricious but mortal hatred to this piece of bread. In token of my eternal enmity, I put it on the opposite side of the little square table at which I was dining, and regarded it at a distance. Presently came others to dine at the tables near me. On my left side came to sit a captain in the uniform of the *Eclaireurs de Seine* and a colonel of *Mobiles*; on my right, a young lady dressed in black, and demure as a Quakeress, but evidently of a class for which Paris is famous. In a little while my companions to right and left had eaten up their bread, and began to look wistfully at mine. Says the colonel of *Mobiles* to me—a stranger whom I had never before met—“Monsieur, are you going to eat your bread, or are you going to take it away? If not, may I have some of it?”—“You may have it all, Colonel; I have had enough.” He took half of it, and shared that half with his friend, the captain; whereupon struck in

Mdlle. Cocotte, saying, "And may I have the other half? Permit me." This is a trifling incident—the sharing of a bit of bread, which a sick man was unable to eat, between a couple of soldiers and a lady of Lorette; but it is characteristic of the day, and I could not help feeling that those who chewed their slender portion of half-baked bread to-day—a portion so small and so bitter that it may be taken as the symbol of many privations, and must awaken many fears—would, if they were capable of serious thought, be led, as they made the most of their hard fare, to think with all the more gloom of General Trochu's failure at Buzenval, and of Chanzy's retreat upon Mayenne.

It is useless to trouble you with many details as to Trochu's failure of yesterday. There are half a dozen excuses brought forward—as, for instance, the delay of Ducrot's advance by reason of a mistake in the fog. War, it has been said of old, is a succession of mistakes; and he is the greatest general who makes fewest mistakes. It would have been a very good thing for Paris if her army had been able to seize the line of heights extending from Garches to Buzenval and La Jonchère. If the army of Paris could retain these heights, the siege would soon be at an end. The attempt of yesterday to seize them was a failure; and I do not know of any good result which came of the battle but this—that it gave the National Guards confidence. They stood in line with the Mobiles and the regular army, and fought side by side with them. As a rule they fought well, and have reason to be satisfied with themselves. It is true that some of them gave way, but this was to be expected; and, as a whole, their attitude has given just pride to themselves, has given confidence to their commanders, and has had a very good effect on the Line and the Mobiles, who have not been over-pleased that they had

to expose their lives in the front rank of battle while the National Guards stood idly looking on, under the name of reserves, but really useless. There are a set of English here who never speak of the National Guards but as grocers, and who say, "What can you expect of grocers? They can't fight; they must be licked." But the National Guards belong to every class of society—to the highest, to the lowest, and to the middle. There are many of the shopkeeping class in it—very many; but you will also find in it crowds of the highest born families in the Faubourg St. Germain; crowds of students, and literary men and artists; crowds also of the working classes, who, whatever be their faults, have none of those qualities which in France are supposed to attach to an interest in grocery. I discovered by chance yesterday how deeply the National Guards were engaged in the battle of Buzenval.

I went out early to see what was to be seen, but I was suffering from a severe attack of influenza. The day was damp and cold; there was a fog which made it difficult to see anything; and, after finding that the French had made good way, and that there was a lull in the battle, I returned to town. I suppose I was about the first to return from the field. As I entered by the Porte Maillot there was a most wonderful sight,—a dense crowd—perhaps 2,000—men, women, and children, waiting with dread anxiety for the news. They could see nothing, standing as they did for the most part behind the drawbridge, but they listened to every shot that was fired, and looked hard for any one coming from the field. I was almost torn to pieces. They set upon me with terrible eagerness. "What news? How goes the battle? Do you know anything of the 122nd of the National Guards? How many guns did they find at Montretout?" Of course I could tell them very little. I had only seen

little bits of the battle. But one thing I could tell them—and perhaps it was thoughtless of me to have let it out—that, whereas so far the troops had been successful, Paris must be prepared for many killed and wounded. The number of the wounded was very great. It was the Prussian musketry fire that did most execution. The artillery was comparatively harmless. The Prussian gunners fire with a beautiful regularity, which is, however, little serviceable. If you marked where a shell fell, you were pretty sure to note that every twenty seconds other shells would fall in the same place, or thereabouts, with the mechanical regularity of a steam-hammer. Beware of that particular spot, and you were comparatively safe. It was, I have said, the musketry that did most execution, and its effect was murderous. In the rear of the battle, the sight of the ambulance carriages and the stretcher-bearers leading up to them, was to be compared only to the precincts of the Italian Opera in London on a grand night, when you see long lines of carriages, sometimes three deep, waiting to carry home the gay assemblage. If any of your readers go to the Opera after reading this letter, let them imagine, instead of neat broughams and capacious carriages filled with bright-eyed beauties, long files of stretchers three deep, each containing a wounded man, groaning and bleeding and blanched of feature, and each borne off tenderly by two men, one at the head and the other at the foot. My imagination full of this terrible sight, I told the people as I entered the walls of Paris that there were many wounded. They were greatly agitated; and then came the women round me, anxious to know of their kindred. One had a son in this regiment of the National Guards, another a husband, a third a brother, some one else a father. I shall never forget the trembling of the people waiting to have news

of their nearest and dearest—their faltering voices, their swimming eyes, their restless manner. And if ever you wish to picture to yourself the horrors of war, do not let imagination rest alone upon the battle-field. Think also of the thousands of people at the gates of this great city—thousands of all classes, fine ladies and poor women—in agony for those they loved the best; wondering whether they are safe, fearing they are dead, certain they must be wounded. This it is to fight with National Guards. They fight with their families in sight, and the agony of these families waiting at the gates is, in some respects, greater than the agony of the field of battle itself. The crowds, let me add, were not merely at the gates. All up the Avenue Général Uhrich, formerly known as the Avenue de l'Impératrice, they stood in groups. Half-way up is a solid barricade right across the Avenue. They got on the top of this barricade trying to see something, and all round the foot of the Arc de Triomphe they stood watching with an intensity which it was most painful to witness.

One incident of the battle I must mention as very peculiar.

A man was shot on the field for a crime. He was a private in the 119th of the Line. He had, for some reason or other, perhaps not expecting to be discovered, shot his captain in the battle. Summary justice was executed upon him. Half a dozen men were told aside to shoot him. He fell—but not dead, it seems. By-and-by came the “brancardiers,” as they are called—that is, the stretcher-bearers—and see a wounded but living man on the field. They propose to carry him away. The soldiers of the regiment see what they are doing, and warn them off. They find that the man they had shot is still alive. They lift him up to see if he can stand, intending to shoot him again; but he falls flat on the ground with a heavy thud. A soldier levels his gun at

him as he lies on the ground, apparently quite conscious.

The ball hits but does not take effect. The man still lives. Then another soldier comes forward and fires. There is something wrong with his gun, and it does not go off. A third soldier then tries, and he at last succeeds. He sends a ball through the head of the poor wretch who had killed his captain. A battle is horrible enough in itself, but an execution like this in the midst of it is worse than all. Perhaps a few more executions would be of use to the discipline of the French army. The Republican authorities are much too mild to the sins of the soldiers.

Jan. 21.—The state of feeling in Paris to-day is very confused. All sorts of schemes are mooted; all sorts of suspicions are in the air; all sorts of rumours are afloat. The schemes I hear are most of them extremely wild, and it would be useless to discuss them. They all, in so far as they are at all definite, involve an impossibility—depriving the Government of their power, and still imposing upon them responsibility. There is a talk of displacing General Trochu in his military capacity, either by General Vinoy or by one of the Admirals. And it is strongly urged that General Le Flô should leave the Ministry of War, giving up his place to Dorian. Nobody knows what will happen. People are very excited. This excitement will wreak its fury on somebody or other. But I do not think they have any intention of surrender. What the incapacity of some of the Ministers may lead them to it is impossible to conjecture; but all the aim of the people at present is to avoid surrender and hold out to the last. If they have confidence in their leaders, they will dare anything, submit to anything. If they have no such confidence, we shall have a bad time of it in Paris very soon—perhaps to-morrow.

Jan. 22, A.M.—The sky begins to clear. I do not mean to

say that the day begins to brighten, and that the prospect is good, but at least we are getting out of doubt and confusion. The announcement appears in the official journal of to-day, to the effect that General Trochu has given up his military command, remaining in power simply as President of the Government, and that General Vinoy has consented to command the armies of Paris, and to try what he can do for the salvation of the capital. Is he likely to succeed any better? It is quite certain that most military critics out of Paris have declared, and will continue to declare, that it was simply impossible for General Trochu to raise the siege of the capital; and from this point of view they may be inclined to speak lightly of his failure. But then the General had no business to declare, as he did, his ability to raise the blockade, and in all his three attempts he made serious blunders which might have been avoided. He has shown wisdom in many respects, and great powers of organization; but he has been slow to act, and he has not had the power to organize the War-office. The stories of the blunders that were committed in bringing together the army on the morning of the 19th are frightful, and the troops could not be brought together without such a disaster as this—that the right wing, Ducrot's army, was not ready to begin its work for four hours after the battle had commenced. There was a great concentration of force; but not an eighth part of the troops which were massed round Mont Valérien were called into action; and though the French artillery did their work well, firing with a precision and with a business-like style which it would be impossible to surpass, there were not enough guns brought to bear, and men were sent on the hopeless task of doing what guns alone could accomplish—that is, to knock down stone walls. Having the greatest respect for

General Trochu—a man of a fine simplicity of character and of rare civic virtues—I wish to speak gently of him in his fall. He has done a great work; and it is most probable that the greatest work expected of him—that of raising the siege of Paris—was beyond the strength of any general under the circumstances; but he has committed errors which make it only right that he should now cede the military command to another, who may be happier in his efforts. That other is General Vinoy, who has always done his work about Paris well. No failures are recorded of him. On the three occasions on which General Trochu made his sorties, General Vinoy always did perfectly his share of the work; no blunders, and no failure—if we except the reconnaissance at Issy the other night, where he was scarcely to blame. Is it to be hoped that the same success will attend the larger operations which he will now be called on to direct? Success is not likely with such a War-office and such a War Minister as we have here; and there is a loud cry for Dorian, the Minister of Public Works, to assume the direction of the War-office. The fact is that M. Dorian has had a good deal to do with the direction of the War-office in a quiet way, and he will shrink from the invidious duty of publicly replacing poor old Le Flô. But public opinion demands the sacrifice, and he will find it difficult to resist the cry.

You will see from these arrangements that the French mean to go on fighting, spite of defeat and bad news. They may not succeed—but, at least, they will fall honourably; and the courage which they display in the midst of so much discouragement; the stern will that, as long as it is possible, refuses to be conquered; the hope which cannot be abashed, are moral qualities worthy of all admiration, and certain hereafter to bear good fruit.

Jan. 22, P.M.—After I had written the foregoing pages, some friends came in upon me to announce that there had been a riot in the night; that more trouble was expected in the course of the day; and that, riot or no riot, it was time for breakfast. I verily believe that the midday meal in Paris is the most sacred of all repasts. Never is anything important done in Paris while the so-called breakfast is going on. You may be guillotined at early dawn, or you may be revolutionized at the hour of absinthe: at the hour of dinner Paris is in the full tide of enjoyment and social excitement; and fortunes and hearts are lost and won at the supper hour. But Paris is always sleepy at midday, and masticates its food lazily, though pleasantly, like cattle ruminating in a meadow. So I made up my mind that I should be in good time for any popular explosion if I arrived at the Hôtel de Ville about one o'clock. A riot at the breakfast hour is incredible.

It had spread like wildfire that the friends of Flourens had got possession of the prison of Mazas in the course of the night, and had released him with all the other political prisoners. What will be the effect of Flourens' release of course one cannot predict—but probably it will not be much. Such an augury is based on my knowledge of the feebleness of his influence in Paris, and of the anxiety of the people in their trouble to be united, so as to repress sedition. But augur as we may from known facts—it is at the same time impossible to foretell what one or two determined men may not be able to do by sheer impudence, and so it happens that we are sure of nothing. What occurred to-day at the Hôtel de Ville has ended in perfect quietness, but it may occur again, and no one can answer for the result. It requires but a word to produce incalculable mischief—a blow may make a revolution, and one drop of blood

may set rivers flowing. When I arrived at the Hôtel de Ville all was very still. There were crowds—the Sunday crowds that come out on a fine day—and they stood in groups talking ; but all was peace. I asked if there had been any demonstrations. There had been none. Had any Mayors or their adjuncts from the revolutionary districts arrived at the head of any battalions to demand the Commune? None at all. Indeed, the crowd in the great square in front of the Hôtel de Ville was few enough, and if there had been any demonstration, it must have been a miserable failure. A few companies of the National Guard, however, arrived, but they marched “cross in the air”—that is, holding the butt-end of their musket upwards, and they soon dispersed among the crowd. The ardent revolutionists were of course as much discouraged as dismayed by this inept behaviour. They plunged in among the groups, upbraiding everybody, and declaring that to overthrow the Government it was necessary for all to keep close in battle array. Then followed a clatter of tongues and vehement harangues, in which it was demonstrated that General Vinoy was an ancient Imperialist, and that he would assuredly sell Paris to the Prussians as Bazaine had sold Metz. Nothing would do but the Commune, and the election of some young and obscure colonel to the command of all the French armies. The young colonel must be a “pure” Republican, and all the old Trochu and Imperialist or reactionary set must be swept away. As, however, notwithstanding the violence of these discourses, the people seemed little inclined to come to blows, I left them and advanced to the railings of the middle door of the Hôtel de Ville. Inside, a colonel of the National Guard was addressing the crowd, and begging them to observe order, but especially to beware of playing into the hands of the Prussians by fomenting revolution. Outside the

railings a young man, who wore the cap of a civil engineer, was urging just the contrary. He climbed half-way up the railings, spoke with great fervour, and ended his speech with the cry of "Vive la Commune!" But at the very moment that he climbed the railings, raised this cry, and the crowd rent the air with approving shouts, three windows of the Hôtel de Ville were thrown open, and in the centre window appeared a Garde Mobile, Chassepôt in hand. It was a warning, and the effect was electric. It was remembered that on the last day of October the Mobiles were chiefly instrumental in stamping out the revolution. They were loyal to a man. There might be divisions in the National Guard. In the Garde Mobile there was unshaken loyalty; and if the general in command of Paris lifts but his little finger to them, woe to the revolution! woe to the Commune! woe to all who resist authority! Therefore the sudden appearance of this one Mobile, musket in hand, had quite a dramatic effect. It was enough. The civil engineer leapt down from the railings, and the little crowd which had gathered around him took to its heels with laudable expedition.

After this the most frightful rumours began to circulate.

It was said that behind each door of the Hôtel de Ville two mitrailleuses were waiting, ready loaded, to massacre the people. It was said that in the Conciergerie, at the neighbouring Mairie, and in all the public buildings, troops were massed so as to rush out upon the crowd at any moment. A fit of prudence, therefore, took possession of the poor harmless crowd of gesticulating, jabbering, dissatisfied, hungry Parisians; only a Parisian crowd does not keep long in one strain—it is changeable as a weather-vane. And suddenly, as I was admiring, with some sense of amusement, the prudence of the throng, and began to speculate as to what was the real value of

such men's lives that they should be so prudent, or what was the worthlessness of life that had in it no stability, I found that the crowd had become quite bold again, all because of the arrival of two companies of the National Guard from the other side of the water. Then a popular orator twisted himself up a lamp-post, and in this hazardous position made a speech, which was enthusiastically applauded. After the speech some persons pushed towards the door of the Hôtel de Ville, while others at the same moment began to retire in a manner so precipitate that, although the movement was directed by the noble sentiment of wisdom, it must be described by the undignified name of skedaddle. And thus for a long time the crowds—for there were several of them—massed in different corners of the great square, continued talking, and now and then rushing up to one corner and then to another, without having, apparently, any definite purpose. Some of the National Guards, however, seemed very desirous to fire at somebody or something. They fondled their cartridges with impatience, and wore a sinister look which seemed to indicate business. This, perhaps, was the reason why so few persons were on the Place—few as compared with the occasions of previous demonstrations. For my own part, also, I must say that the moment seemed to have come when it was necessary for me to think of what unhappy generals in these days call a strategical movement. I did not see the good of getting a chance shot—all for nothing, and I therefore took up a position, with my back to the Seine, so that I could get behind the Hôtel de Ville if it were attacked in front, and so that, if it were attacked on all sides, I could escape into the bombarded districts of Paris, which would be comparatively safe. The riot was not likely to extend into the bombarded districts, and it would be

easier to escape the Prussian shells than the stray shots exchanged between the mob and the Mobiles.

My precaution had its reward. A detachment of National Guards suddenly appeared—it was now about three o'clock—and marched straight up to the railings of the Hôtel de Ville, to the right of the middle door. They were about two hundred strong, with a red flag at their head, and I am told that they came from Montmartre. Having taken up their station in front of the railings, some one climbed upon them—it seemed to me to be the same person who had made the speech from the lamp-post—but I cannot remember exactly this detail. He began talking to the Guards very vehemently, but he had not made much way when in a moment he leapt off the railings with unnatural haste. This movement was instantly followed by the report of a gun. Then followed about ten shots, and then again several volleys. The windows of the Hôtel de Ville were peopled quickly with Mobiles, who fired down on the crowd, while the National Guard fired back again upon the windows of the Hôtel de Ville. What occurred afterwards I did not stop to witness. I had seen enough for the moment, and took advantage of my strategical position to seek refuge in the little streets behind the Hôtel de Ville. The panic was great. Men, women, and children fell and tripped over each other in the most ignominious fashion, so long as one could still hear in the distance the reports of musketry. I cannot give you the details of the casualties to-night. The evening papers are all silent on the subject, with the exception of the *Soir*, which gives a few sentences of general description, so vague that they can scarcely have been written by an eye-witness. I am given to understand that several women were shot, and the victims must have been

numerous if it is considered that the combatants were within a few yards of each other. The revolutionists were, of course, obliged to retire before the firm attitude of the defenders of the Hôtel de Ville, but I am told that the firing continued for full a quarter of an hour, though the Place was speedily evacuated by the rioters. It was from behind trees and kiosks and street-corners that these continued for a time to aim at the windows of the Hôtel de Ville. I am also told that odd shots were fired in the back streets for a long time afterwards.

I did not venture to return to the neighbourhood of the Hôtel de Ville till four o'clock, and I then found that the Place was occupied by the military, chiefly Mobs and the Line, and that troops were coming up from every direction. On the quays I met a whole regiment coming up all ready for action, with their blankets arranged upon their breasts so as to fulfil the double office of keeping them warm and warding off adventurous bullets. But the revolutionists know that they are powerless against such a concentration of force, and the attempt at riot was quickly suppressed. Very few persons in Paris know to-night there has been a riot with bloodshed to-day at the Hôtel de Ville. At the restaurant at which I dined I heard people ask each other indifferently—"Why did they beat the *rappel* to-day at four o'clock? Was there any trouble?"—"I am sure I don't know; I saw nothing," was the reply. All was quietly done, and soon over; and I do not think the rioters have a chance.

Jan. 23.—According to the official report of the affair of yesterday, it appears that there were five killed and eighteen wounded, as the result of the encounter between the insurgents and the Mobs. The attempt

at insurrection is completely suppressed, and the vast majority of the Parisians will accept with acclamation any measures of repression, however severe, which the Government may deem necessary for the preservation of order. General Vinoy, in fact, agreed to accept the military command of Paris only on condition of stern decrees being passed to prevent any chance of popular disturbance. Accordingly, the clubs have been extinguished in which certain orators nightly spouted sedition; and the *Combat* and the *Réveil*, the two newspapers which—the one in the morning, the other in the evening—daily stirred up the people to rebellion, have been suppressed. Numerous arrests have been made, and the Government may now adopt the once famous words of the ex-Emperor, "For order—I will answer."

The people of Paris have been taken by surprise again in this matter, although they had been forewarned by the orators of the clubs. The greatest blunder committed was the surrender of the Mazas prison by the captain in charge of it. He might have defied the mob outside—the prison is so strong—but he yielded to fear and false reports. It is the way in all revolutions. The insurgents come to the men in authority with the wildest reports as to their power and as to the doings of their fellow-conspirators in other parts of the town. The men in authority are overawed—believe the false reports of the rioters—imagine that these rioters represent some rival authority—and succumb often without a struggle. So a couple of hundred men came up to the Hôtel de Ville on Sunday, and, unsupported, expected that they could take possession of it, and command Paris merely by talking loud and firing a few shots. It is perfectly well ascertained now that it was an insurgent band of National Guards that first fired.

They belonged to the 101st Battalion—the same which marched drunk to Issy some weeks ago, got into a chapel, and profaned it with all kinds of buffooneries.

The death-rate this week shows a great increase—4,465, which is 483 more than last week. Strange to say, the diseases arising from derangement of the alimentary system are diminished. The chief increase arises from bronchitis, pneumonia, and typhoid fever.

The French Government had at length come face to face with the food question, which could no longer be put off. Up to this point there might have been optimists and pessimists, but now the question had become practical and urgent. On the 8th of September, when few persons believed that a siege of Paris could last more than six or seven weeks, the *Journal Officiel* contained a declaration, which had been placarded by M. Magnin, the Minister of Commerce, in which it was asserted that “the provisions of food, liquid, and alimentary substances of every kind will be quite sufficient for the alimentation of a population of two millions for two months.” Four months and eight days had since passed, and, in the midst of the severest privations, Paris had resisted as long as she could reasonably hope for aid from the armies outside, while a morsel of bread remained to feed the inhabitants and the defenders. On the 27th of January, eight days after the last battle fought under the walls of Paris, and just as the failures of Chanzy and Faidherbe became known, there were in store 42,000 quintals of corn, barley, rye, rice, and oats, which, reduced to flour, represented, in consequence of the short yield of oats, only 35,000 quintals of flour that could be made into bread. That quantity comprised 11,000 quintals of corn and 6,000 quintals of rice that had been given up by the War Administration, which had not provisions

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for the troops for more than ten days, if they were to be fed as the troops in the field; that is, 12,000 quintals of rice, corn, and flour, and 20,000 quintals of oats. In ordinary times Paris requires for its subsistence 8,000 quintals of flour daily, 2,000,000 pounds of bread; but after the 18th of January, when the flour was rationed, this consumption was reduced to 5,300 quintals. Thus, placing the figure at 5,300 quintals, the total quantity of provisions on hand represented a supply of seven days. For three weeks there had been no store of flour, the mills only furnishing each day the flour necessary for the day following. A few shells falling on the Cail works would have sufficed at once to endanger the alimentation of the whole city. It was in vain to enter upon new discussions—Paris and its Government were helpless and without resource. In this extremity the Government of National Defence resolved to send M. Jules Favre to Versailles, and obtain for Paris the best terms that were to be had.

On the 24th of January M. Favre applied for an interview with Count Bismarck, supped with the Imperial Chancellor, and returned to Paris. On the 25th he returned from Paris with his private secretary, in time to dine with the Count, and left again at 2 P.M. on the 26th. At 6 A.M. on the following morning carriages were sent to the Bridge of Sèvres to meet M. Favre, General Beaufort d'Hautepoule, and three French officers, who dined with Count Bismarck, and returned to Paris at night. The bombardment of Paris ceased at 1 A.M. on the morning of the 28th, and was not afterwards renewed. Early on the 28th General Vinoy and other officers arrived from Paris, and were closeted all day with Count Bismarck, General Moltke, and M. Favre. At 7 P.M. on that day an armistice for twenty-one days was signed.

Count Bismarck was unable, after his many public denials

of the representative character of the Government of National Defence, to negotiate a Treaty of Peace with its members, who themselves were probably not desirous of subscribing the conditions which Germany was in a position to impose. On the other hand, he was unwilling to treat with them for the mere surrender of Paris. He gained all he desired by treating M. Jules Favre and his colleagues as persons capable of controlling the movements of the armed forces of France, and of summoning a National Assembly. Accordingly the Convention which he signed with M. Favre provided for an Armistice of three weeks' duration, and the convocation of a freely-elected Assembly, which should authorize either the conditions of peace or the continuance of the war. The Armistice-Convention was in the following terms :—

Between Count von Bismarck, Chancellor of the Germanic Confederation, stipulating in the name of His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia, and M. Jules Favre, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the National Defence, both furnished with regular powers, the following arrangements have been determined :—

Article 1.

A general armistice over all the line of military operations in course of execution between the German and the French armies shall begin for Paris on this day, and for the Departments within the term of three days. The duration of the armistice shall be for twenty-one days, dating from to-day ; so that, unless it shall be renewed, the armistice will terminate on the 19th of February, at noon. The belligerent armies will preserve their respective positions, which will be separated by a line of demarcation. This line will commence from Pont Evêque, on the coast of the Department of Calvados, and be continued upon Lignéres,

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in the north-east of the Department of the Mayenne, passing between Briouze and Fromentel. Touching the Department of the Mayenne at Lignéières, it will follow the limit which separates that Department from the Departments of the Orne and of the Sarthe, to the north of Morannes, and will be continued in such a way as to leave in German occupation the Departments of the Sarthe, Indre-et-Loire, Loir-et-Cher, Loiret, and Yonne, as far as a point at which, to the east of Quarre-les-Tombes, the Departments of the Côte d'Or, the Nièvre, and the Yonne touch each other. Setting out from this point, the tracing of the line will be reserved for an understanding which shall take place as soon as the contracting parties shall be informed as to the actual situation of the military operations which are being executed in the Departments of the Côte d'Or, of the Doubs, and of the Jura. In any case, the line will pass through the territory composed of these three Departments, leaving to German occupation the Departments situated to the north, and to the French army those situated to the south of this territory. The Departments of the North and of the Pas de Calais, the fortresses of Givet and Langres, with the territory which surrounds them to a distance of ten kilomètres, and the peninsula of Havre, as far as a line drawn from Etretat in the direction of St. Romain, will remain outside the limits of the German occupation. The two belligerent armies, and their advanced posts on either side, will remain at a distance of at least ten kilomètres from the lines drawn to separate their positions. Each of the two armies reserves for itself the right of maintaining its authority in the territory that it occupies, and of employing the means which its commanders may judge necessary to attain that end. The armistice applies equally to the naval forces of the two countries, adopting the meridian of Dunkerque as the line of demarcation, to the west of which the French fleet will remain,

and to the east of which, as soon as they can be warned, will withdraw the German ships of war which find themselves in western waters. The captures which are made after the conclusion, and before the notification, of the armistice will be restored, as well as the prisoners who may be taken in the interval indicated. The military operations in the territory of the Departments of Doubs, Jura, and Côte d'Or, as well as the siege of Belfort, shall continue independently of the armistice, until an agreement shall be arrived at regarding the line of demarcation—the tracing of which through the three Departments mentioned has been reserved for an ulterior understanding.

Article 2.

The armistice thus agreed upon has for its object to permit the Government of National Defence to convoke an Assembly, freely elected, which will pronounce upon the question whether the war shall be continued, or on what conditions peace shall be made. The Assembly will meet in the city of Bordeaux. Every facility will be given by the commanders of the German armies for the election, and the meeting of the Deputies who will compose that Assembly.

Article 3.

There shall be immediately surrendered to the German army by the French military authorities all the forts forming the perimeter of the exterior defence of Paris, as well as their material of war. The communes and houses situated outside that perimeter, or between the forts, may be occupied by the German troops as far as a line to be drawn by military commissioners. The ground between this line and the fortified *enceinte* of the city of Paris will be interdicted to the armed forces of the two sides. The manner of surrendering the forts, and the drawing of the

line already mentioned, will form the object of a protocol to be annexed to the present convention.

Article 4.

During the armistice the German army shall not enter the city of Paris.

Article 5.

The *enceinte* shall be disarmed of its guns, the carriages of which will be transported into the forts designated for that purpose by a commission of the German army.

Article 6.

The garrisons (Army of the Line, Mobile Guard, and Marine) of the forts and of Paris shall be prisoners of war, excepting a division of 12,000 men, which the military authorities in Paris will preserve for service inside the city. The troops who are prisoners of war shall lay down their arms, which will be collected in the places designated, and given up according to arrangements made by a commissioner, in the usual manner. These troops shall remain in the interior of the city, of which they will not be allowed to pass the *enceinte* during the armistice. The French authorities bind themselves to take care that every individual belonging to the army and to the Mobile Guard shall remain in the interior of the town. The officers of the captured troops shall be designated in a list to be delivered to the German authorities. At the expiration of the armistice all the combatants belonging to the army confined in Paris will have to constitute themselves prisoners of war to the German army, if before that time peace is not concluded. The officers made prisoners will retain their arms.

Article 7.

The National Guard will retain its arms. It will be charged with the protection of Paris and the maintenance of order. The same will be the case with the gendarmerie and the assimilated troops employed in the municipal service, such as the Republican Guard, the Douaniers, and the Pompiers. The whole of this category shall not exceed 3,500. All the corps of *Francs-tireurs* shall be dissolved by ordinance of the French Government.

Article 8.

Immediately after the signature of these presents, and before the taking possession of the forts, the Commander-in-Chief of the German armies will give every facility to the commissioners whom the French Government will send, whether into the Departments or abroad, to take steps for the revictualling, and to bring to the city the commodities which are destined for it.

Article 9.

After the surrender of the forts, and after the disarmament of the *enceinte* and of the garrison, stipulated in Articles 5 and 6, the revictualling of Paris will be effected freely by transit upon the railroads and the rivers. The provisions intended for this revictualling shall not be drawn from the districts occupied by the German troops; and the French Government engages itself to obtain provisions outside of the line of demarcation which surrounds the position of the German armies, except in the case of an authorization to the contrary effect given by the commander of the latter.

Article 10.

Every person wishing to quit the city of Paris must be furnished with the regular permits, delivered by the French

military authority, and submitted to the *visa* of the German authorities. Permits or *visas* will be granted, in right of their position, to candidates, to the provincial deputations, and to the deputies of the Assembly. The free movement of the persons who have received the authorization indicated will be permitted only between six in the morning and six in the evening.

Article 11.

The city of Paris shall pay a municipal contribution of war amounting to 200,000,000 francs. The payment must be effected before the 15th day of the armistice—the mode of payment to be determined by a mixed German and French commission.

Article 12.

During the armistice nothing shall be taken away from the public objects of value which may serve as pledges for the recovery of war contributions.

Article 13.

The transport into Paris of arms, of munitions, or of articles entering into their manufacture, is forbidden during the term of the armistice.

Article 14.

Immediate steps shall be taken for the exchange of all prisoners of war made by the French army since the commencement of the war. For this end the French authorities will hand, as promptly as possible, nominal lists of the German prisoners of war to the German military authorities at Amiens, at Le Mans, at Orleans, and at Vesoul. The liberation of the German prisoners of war will be effected upon the points nearest to the frontier. The German authorities will deliver in exchange, on the same points

and in the briefest possible time, to the French military authorities, a like number of French prisoners of war of corresponding grades. The exchange will extend to civil prisoners, such as captains of ships of the German merchant navy, and the civilian French prisoners who have been interned in Germany.

Article 15.

A postal service for letters, not sealed, will be organized between Paris and the Departments, through the medium of the head-quarters at Versailles. In faith of which the undersigned have appended to the present convention their signatures and their seals.

Done at Versailles, the 28th of January, 1871.

(L.S.) BISMARCK.

(L.S.) FAVRE.

By a subsidiary convention it was decided that the *enceinte* of Paris should form a line of demarcation for the French troops, while another, exterior to it, was marked out for the Germans. It was further provided that the surrender of the forts and redoubts should take place on the 29th of January, 1871, commencing at 10 A.M. The arms, field-pieces, flags, and *matériel* were to be handed over to the military German authorities within a fortnight after the signature of the convention, and be deposited under the direction of the French authorities, at Sévran. An inventory of the armament and *matériel* was to be handed by the French authorities to the German authorities before the 4th of February. The carriages of the guns which armed the ramparts were also to be removed before that date.

The armistice stipulated in this convention was in its leading features favourable to France ; but to this general character there was one exception so striking, that for many days it was impossible to understand how M. Jules Favre

could have consented to it. By the first article the army under General Bourbaki was exposed, or rather consigned, to utter and inevitable ruin. It was the only army that was in imminent danger, and the only one for whose safety no provision had been made. But the obscurity which had never ceased to surround the condition and movements of Bourbaki's force, from the day it began its eastward march, proved fatal to it when the French plenipotentiary was called to negotiate with Count Bismarck. On the 28th of January M. Favre knew so little of the real situation of Bourbaki, that he actually bargained for that fatal exemption of that General's army from the armistice, which in a few days caused its destruction.

As we lately saw, after the catastrophe of Orleans, early in December, three corps of the Army of the Loire were collected at Bourges, and placed under General Bourbaki, with the name of the First Army of the Loire. Its connection with that river, however, proved merely nominal, for it was never employed in co-operation with General Chanzy's Second and true Army of the Loire. Against his own inclinations, and after a statement on his part that his troops were not equipped and supplied for an arduous campaign, General Bourbaki, by the orders of M. Gambetta, led his army eastward. At Bordeaux it was given out that he was going to raise the siege of Belfort and invade Germany. By the 2nd of January he had reached Dijon, from which Werder had suddenly retired five days before. He had with him—after he had effected a junction with the corps sent from Lyons—four corps of three divisions each, and a reserve division, under Cremer, of 13,000 men, his whole force thus reaching a strength of 133,000 men, with 300 guns and mitrailleuses. His movements after reaching Dijon were undecided; but as he was advancing towards Belfort, the German general thought it prudent to leave Vesoul and take up a position

before that fortress. On his way he met a part of Bourbaki's army at Villersexel, and a struggle ensued for the place. Werder, after a fierce contest, won it, but did not attempt to hold it until he had secured his passage towards Belfort. By the 12th of January Werder had reached his goal, and took up a strong position with his right wing at Frahier, his centre at Héricourt, and his left at Montbéliard. General Werder had not more than 40,000 troops, of whom 4,000 were cavalry, after he had been joined by General von Schmeling and General Treskow. On the 15th, at 8 A.M., Bourbaki attacked Werder in his positions with artillery, and two hours later the small arms came into play, and the fire of neither ceased until dark. The attack was feebly conducted, although all accounts agree in the statement that the mingled roar of the artillery, and the rattle of the musketry, was fearful. The Germans were immovable, and bivouacked on the ground they held, the thermometer marking 14° Fahrenheit. Then the defectiveness of the French arrangements became apparent. In Cremer's division neither officers nor men had received any provisions from 7 A.M. on the 14th till 6 P.M. on the 15th. Neither had the horses and mules received any forage for twenty-four hours, although in that time they had marched forty miles. Notwithstanding that the enemy was only 800 yards from the main body of this division, the only thought of the soldiers was to fight against the cold, and, sitting on knapsacks, all, from the general to the private, passed the night huddled round the fires. On the 16th the attack was renewed, Bourbaki throwing immense numbers of troops against Werder's right wing in order to break the German line, but that line remained immovable. The loss on both sides was much greater than on the previous day; the Germans, in a strictly defensive position, had 1,000 killed and wounded, and the French suffered in a much greater proportion. On

the third day, the 17th, the French attack was repeated, but faintly; and in the afternoon Bourbaki's columns commenced a retreat of their whole line, followed by the German artillery. On the 18th General Debschütz pursued them as far as Blamont, returning afterwards to before Belfort. On the 19th and 20th they continued their retreat towards Besançon almost without molestation; but on the latter day General Werder began his southward march, and found everywhere traces of an army not only demoralized, but starving. The road as far as Rougemont was strewn with knapsacks, broken Chassepôts, cartouchepouches, caps, cooking utensils, broken swords, and indescribable refuse. Dead horses were found from which flesh had been hacked as they lay. By the 23rd 12,000 prisoners had been taken. The army had lost all organization and discipline, and was in a state of dissolution, when a new enemy descended upon its path. Werder's retreat from Dijon and Bourbaki's advance at the end of the year were events too sudden to permit of the sending of reinforcements direct to the German general from the army of Prince Frederick Charles. But as early as the 2nd of January the 2nd Corps, under General Fransecky, was sent from before Paris, and on the 18th of January was within forty miles of Dijon, expecting to have to strike on Bourbaki's flank or rear as he was engaged with Werder. It was joined by other corps, and came upon Bourbaki's army during its retreat. Its brigades passed in succession before Dijon, where General Garibaldi engaged them with a strictly local success, and deemed that his Army of the Vosges was baffling the designs of the Germans, while the latter were all the time accumulating upon Bourbaki's rear. The capture at Dôle of 230 railway waggons loaded with provisions, forage, and clothing, was an irreparable disaster for the French army, and its commander, one of the bravest of the

Imperial generals, an admirable general of division, but apparently lacking the qualifications for chief command, attempted suicide.

Such was the situation of military affairs in the east of France when M. Jules Favre negotiated the armistice. Count Bismarck, anxious that Belfort should be in German hands when terms of peace were discussed, had required that the fortress should be surrendered. As he must have expected, this demand was refused, and he thereupon declared that in that case the siege operations must go on. M. Jules Favre had so little suspicion of the real state of the facts, that he actually stipulated that if Werder were left at liberty to besiege Belfort, Bourbaki should be free to endeavour to raise the siege. The request was granted, and the consequences of M. Favre's ignorance at once became apparent.

The German generals before Paris lost no time in entering upon possession of the forts they had so hardly won. The King of Prussia, who by that time had assumed the title of Emperor, conferred on him by the princes and people of Germany, visited Fort Valérien on the 29th of January. The Special Correspondent at the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia, describing the visit and the interior of the works, wrote:—

Mont Valérien, occupied by the Germans, was a standpoint in modern history. The conquerors marched in and hoisted their flag, and wandered over the place at leisure to explore the work. Mont Valérien was empty and desolate when the Germans entered; and the complaints as to food and lodging which the soldiers uttered, on their bivouac in the barracks of their coveted prize, were characteristic incidents of the time. Grim and silent, with its great empty barracks, and its huge rifled cannon staring blindly into the mist, Mont Valérien changed

masters the very morning after Bismarck and Favre had signed their memorable convention. When I visited the fort in the afternoon, the Germans seemed to be comfortably established. Waggon-loads of food and baggage had toiled up the winding road to the central parade-ground, and sentinels on duty, with the air of old inhabitants, seemed to marvel that any outsiders could have the audacity to visit "their" Valérien. The fortress is very imposing as you sight it from the southward, standing out boldly against the sky, with some resemblance to Edinburgh Castle, though earthy instead of rocky in its standpoint. Valérien, moreover, has the air of being overweighted by the huge square barracks on the top of the mound. One is apt to mistake the size of the place as a whole, and to think it smaller than it really is, until, having left one's carriage at the bottom of the ascent, one has toiled up 'to the parade-ground before the barracks.

All the world of head-quarters was bent on seeing Valérien yesterday. Princes and generals, doctors and post-office officials, rode or drove from Versailles to the entrance-gate. The rounding ascent from the gate to the barracks was as lively as a fashionable promenade at a watering-place, save for the absence of the gentler sex. As we walked slowly up, we met two French waggons coming down with personal baggage, which had been left behind on the 29th. This was the only appearance of red trousers and képis to suggest bygone times. When once the waggoners had passed, there was nothing but German occupation to be seen, and the German language to be heard, throughout the fort. Yet stay! I must record that some one told me of a few Frenchmen stowed away somewhere out of sight, or remaining for a while in the fort on special duty, perhaps to pack up another waggon-load of baggage. The Germans spoke with glee

of having found, on the previous morning, a couple of marines in an outhouse, who had remained behind, overcome by drink. "The sleeper awakened" was a parallel to their astonishment, when they discovered themselves among the enemy. They were, however, allowed to slip away, and advised to go to Paris as fast as they could.

The Emperor, in a carriage with four black horses, preceded by a few hussars and followed by dragoons, came swiftly up the approach to the gateway, crossed the drawbridge, rattled under the arch, and, turning slightly to the right, began the steeper ascent. The grand guard presented arms, and stragglers of all sorts along the road came rigidly to attention. Those who were on the parade-ground hurried to the corner where Kaiser Wilhelm would arrive; and those who were examining the great gun not far away clambered on to its ponderous carriage to have a better view. His Majesty seemed to be in excellent health and spirits, and returned the greeting of the troops in his usual hearty manner. A smile well becomes the victor's face. This entry into the French stronghold was a token of conquest won by much patience and perseverance, by cold nights of watching and gallant repulsing of sorties; and the Emperor might be proud of his soldiers. They had not shed their blood to climb to the summit of Valérien; but, by much bloodshed and fighting, they had held the positions which secured its surrender. If there should never be an entry into Paris, the success of the siege will nevertheless be proved by terms of peace most favourable to Germany.

Mont Valérien, with its barracks and outworks, and heavy guns, represents an immense amount of labour. The base of the mound, so to speak, is regularly fortified with a ditch, a counterscarp, and glacis, whilst on the summit are not only barracks, establishments which might have been burnt like those of Issy and Montrouge,

but some batteries for long-range guns very formidable to an advancing foe. It was these batteries which made such play in all directions towards the end of November, and kept the neighbourhood awake by their heavy booming noise. The hugest gun of all has a small circular work to itself, and can be pointed against Versailles or St. Germain, or the flat ground beyond the Seine by Bezons, as may be thought expedient. It is a piece intended to be carried by some powerful ironclad ship, and fires a conical shell some nine inches in diameter. It is a breech-loader, as is its seafaring companion, the next largest cannon in the fort; and the two together form an armament not to be despised, in the modern style of few and heavy pieces, but they were supported in Valérien by a motley gathering of other cannon, great and small—smooth bores, as the surviving aborigines, and rifled guns of various sizes, which have been added to the armament to increase its strength. You would find piles of round shot, those relics of the past, by hunting about for them, or might choose out a cavalry sabre from the armoury in the fort which should have the ring of the old hard-hitting cuirassier tactics about it. Formidable as Mont Valérien undoubtedly is, the place cannot boast of being completely equipped on the scale of those ponderous rifled guns upon the summit.

Of two of the southern forts the same Correspondent wrote:—

I have had my first glimpse of the interior of much-battered Fort Issy. The fort is not very conspicuous; its strength, in fact, is artfully concealed, and it looks like a mound of snow-covered earth, with some ruined buildings behind it, heaped up for no particular purpose, save that Prussian sentries should stand upon the top. We could see them marching up and down, and could

see the German flag on the signal-staff in the north-east corner. Then, as we approached still nearer the gateway, it became clear that there was a deep ditch round the central mound, with scarp and counterscarp, to break the necks of those who would press rashly on to it. The gateway, protected by an immense traverse on the inside against shells coming from the southward, was filled with Prussian soldiers, who lounged there in as natural a manner as if they had belonged to the place for years. There were artillerymen and infantry of the 82nd Regiment, forming the new garrison; and, besides these regular inhabitants, there were a number of staff officers, who had come to have an inside view of Issy. Once inside, the place is seen to be no mound at all, but a large circle of earthwork, and casemates with cannon mounted on the top, surrounding an open space where the ruined barracks stand. The barracks are utterly destroyed, smashed, burnt, and pounded, roofless and floorless, with great holes knocked through and through them. They stand as melancholy wrecks, and must have almost roasted out the garrison at the time they were destroyed. But their destruction is almost all that the bombardment has effected. None of the casemates have been entered by shells; none of the magazines have been touched; and though several guns have been disabled, the greater part of them could have been fired up to the last moment, had the French chosen to fire. There is a small breach in the curtain of the southern front, just enough to indicate what might have been done with time and perseverance. As a whole, however, the fort is less injured than most people at a distance had supposed. Its guns can never have been silent from absolute inability to fire. Their silence was, I fancy, due to despair about the utility of wasting ammunition against the

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hill side, or to scarcity of ammunition wherewith to be wasteful.

What an odd collection of pieces the fort exhibits! There are cannon and mortars; ships' guns and battery guns; new rifled guns of the latest pattern, and old smooth-bores which have been lately rifled. Some of the larger cannon have had their carriages depressed in rear by sinking a hole under them a foot or more deep, and have thus attained an elevation of thirty-five degrees, which accounts for their long range. They were not often successful in hitting the mark, but care had been taken to supply the French gunners with the necessary data for firing with effect. Tables of distances were attached to the guns, having reference to various landmarks. "La Maison Blanche" was so many mètres away; whilst "la route derrière la redoute" was so many more or less, another distance being given for each point named.

There was not much *débris* to be seen in the fort. Either it had been cleared away before the French departed, or there had only been a few gun-carriages smashed, and a few store-waggons damaged, during the fiery ordeal of the last three weeks. It was fortunate for the Germans that they had famine on their side; as battered strongholds in the condition of Fort Issy might have cost them much trouble and loss to capture. Up to the moment of its surrender the fort may be said to have been impregnable by a *coup de main*. But German strategy was too much for its defenders; and there were the familiar spiked helmets to be seen in scores, slung to the piled arms of the soldiers who occupied the casematès. German songs came pleasantly from those dim retreats, and a quantity of meat was being carried across the open space which would have delighted the hearts of the outgoing tenants.

Fort Vanves, which I have visited, is not quite so much damaged as Fort Issy, inasmuch as the barracks, though riddled through and through, have escaped being burnt, and there is no commencement of a breach in the curtain on the south front. Incendiary shells were used against Issy, and not against Vanves, which accounts for the state of the barracks; but, for all that, Vanves was heavily battered, and lost, I believe, more men out of a smaller garrison. The place was rendered very uncomfortable to live in, and that was about all that could be said for the bombardment. No sane commander would have thought of attempting to storm Fort Vanves on the strength of what had been done to it by the German guns.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE newspapers of Paris had done as little as possible to foreshadow the surrender of the city, but every mind had been sufficiently prepared for it by notorious events and universal experience. Nevertheless the dejection of the inhabitants was extreme. The prospect of a revictualment of the city was, however, accepted with a feeling of infinite relief. The first person to enter the city from the camp outside was the Special Correspondent of the *Daily News* at the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Saxony, who described what he saw and experienced in the following letter, dated Paris, February 1:—

Leaving St. Denis yesterday forenoon, I rode through the Prussian foreposts to the neutral ground without interruptions, and so on to the Porte La Chapelle. Here the gates were closed, but a great crowd had collected in expectation of their presently opening. Everybody on the German side laughed at the Quixotry of my attempt to enter. The crowd was orderly, civil, and very patient too. Many people had loaves and cabbages. After waiting half an hour, an officer appeared on the wall, and exclaimed, "À la Porte de Santois." We all therefore made to the right, I, being mounted, beating the others. This gate was open, and an officer examining passes. I rode on slowly, looking straight between my horse's ears, and somehow nobody stopped me. Once

inside, I came in upon sundry mobs of semi-drunken National Guards, and the cry was, "Down with the Prussian!" Matters got serious. The clamour spread, and men tried to clutch at my bridle. I thought it wiser to be bold, and turned on the first man who had shouted, and proclaimed that I was an Englishman, come if possible to do good, not harm, and thus succeeded in diverting attention to my assailant. Then I rode on unmolested through the Rue Arnaud, where were massed several battalions of the National Guard, apparently to receive their pay; then through the Boulevard Magenta, and so straight on to the American Legation, in the Champs Elysées.

"Paris is utterly cowed—fairly beaten;" so said the first Englishman I met, and his opinion is mine. Yet Paris is orderly and decent, and with a certain solemn-morose self-restraint mastering the tendency to demonstrate. The streets were crowded, almost wholly with men in uniform. Civilians were few and far between. Many shops were open, but many also were closed. There is no want of hardware in Paris. You may buy enough and to spare of anything except edibles. Drink is plentiful enough, but, except near the gate, I saw not a soul drunk. The food shops had nothing to show. There were confitures and preserves, jellies, &c., but solid comestibles were conspicuous by their absence. In one shop I saw several large shapes of stuff that looked like lard. When I asked what it was, I found it was horse fat. The bakers' shops were closed; the grating down before the butchers'. And oh, the number of funerals! One, two, three; I met six altogether in the course of my ride. Sad with an exceeding great sadness; such was what I found as regards Paris long before I reached the American Legation; self-respecting, too, in her misery; not blatant; not disposed to collect in jabbering crowds.

Each man went his way with chastened face and listless gait.

I spoke with a soldier of the Line. Yes, he had had enough of it. *Sacré!* They had nearly killed him, these terrible Prussians, and he was very hungry. When would the gates open for food? Food began to be with me a personal question. I had nearly filled my wallet with newspapers, and only stowed away, for an exigency, a few slices of ham. Did ever the rarest geological or mineralogical specimen make such a sensation as these slices of ham? When I at length reached my quarters the servant-women asked permission to take the meagre plateful out, and show it as a curiosity to their companions; and after the ham was eaten, stray visitors came in, attracted by the tidings, and begged for a look at the unwonted viands. The whole city is haunted with the chaste odours which horseflesh gives out in cooking; odours which I learned to appreciate at Metz. They permeate the deserted British Embassy, where, asserting my privileges as a Briton, I stabled my horse; they linger in the corridors of the Grand Hotel, and fight with the taint from wounds in evil case. The Grand Hotel is one huge hospital. Half Paris seems converted into hospitals, if one may judge by the flags. They were more than were needed until the southern bombardment began; and then, when the hospitals, ambulances, orphanages, and madhouses on the south side had to be evacuated, there was a squeeze on this side of the water.

Very touching is the ignorance as to the outside world. "I have seen three English papers since September," said Dr. Gordon, our Medical Commissioner. "Is Ireland quiet? Is Mr. Gladstone still Prime Minister? Is the Princess Louise married?" Such are samples of the questions I have had to answer. The ignorance as to the condition of the Prussians outside is equally dense. The

day after negotiations began, Paris was assured that the investing army had not eaten for three days, and that it was Paris which was granting terms rather than the other way. I am continually asked if the Prussians have not been half-starved all through? What they have done for quarters? Whether there are not 400,000 at the very least surrounding Paris? Whether they do not tremble in their boots at the name of the *Francs-tireurs*? Whether they are not half-devoured by vermin? Whether the King still resides in Versailles? and so on.

The pinch for food is worse than ever, pending the result of the negotiations for its supply. The day before yesterday the hungry broke into the reserved store of potted provisions in the Halle, smashed all obstacles, and looted the place. From one who has paid the prices himself, and has the figures down in black and white without exaggeration, I have the following list:—2 francs for a small shrivelled cabbage; 1 franc for a leek; 45 francs for a fowl; 45 francs for a rabbit (which may be taken for granted as cat); 25 francs for a pigeon; 22 francs for a 2lb. chub; 14 francs per pound for stickleback; 2 francs per pound for potatoes; 40 francs per pound for butter; cheese, 25 francs a pound, when procurable. Meat other than horseflesh is absolutely not to be procured. I was assured that if I offered £50 down in bright shining gold for a veritable beefsteak, I should have no claimant for the money! The last cow that changed hands "for an ambulance" fetched £80. Those left cannot now be bought for money. The bread is not bad—the difficulty is to get it. Only people say there is nothing else to do but wait outside the bakers' and the butchers'. I saw huge throngs at both as I rode through Paris, and chiefly women, waiting silently in the cold. What it must have come to when the Parisians are so utterly crushed down!

Last evening there looked in a party that had been experimenting in dining. They had eaten ostrich, cat, dog, rat, and mice. This seems to me a hard-hearted mode of extracting a new sensation out of the pinch of the times. Far better to dine on horse, and give the price of dainty viands to put bread into the mouths of the poor suffering women and children. Yesterday neither bread nor meat was distributed in this arrondissement. Those who had no money have simply had to hunger. The sins for which Paris used to be famous all belong to the past. She has been half-starved, half-beaten into morality, or it may be that other than physical influences have led her to wash and be clean. You see some drunkenness, but far less than I had looked for, among men whose clock, so to speak, has run down. A decent gloom is everywhere apparent. Some assert that the gloom is as much theatrical and assumed as had been the previous valorous seeming. I don't think so. I think you can see the iron eating and burning into the hearts of these men—silent with unwonted silence; moody as they never knew how to be before; and as the downcast faces pass I draw a good augury from them for France and Paris. The great and beautiful feature of the siege has been the absence of crime. No murders, no robberies, but a virtue in which, to me, there is something pathetic. The half-lit streets are empty by half-past nine. The midnight air is not tortured by the sound of revellers, although there are no police to keep order. I woke up between twelve and one in the night, and the silence made me for the moment think myself back at Margency.

The trees on the boulevards have suffered less than I expected. In the Champs Elysées they are utterly ruined, and the others elsewhere have, I am told, shared the same fate. The scarcity of wood was terrible in

these latter days. People cannot get their washing done for want of wood to heat the copper. So far as I can learn, the moral effect of the bombardment on the population was terrible. After the first day of defiance the Government felt the pressure. M. Jules Simon told a friend of mine that the bombardment of St. Denis had shortened the siege by a week. Competent authorities estimate that Paris, had she been obstinate, might have gone on for another month, had the pickles and preserves, and all the odds and ends now sold at exorbitant prices, been taken and rationed. But to what purpose? To-day I am to try to get out, which they say is more difficult still; but I put my trust in the aspect of preternatural stolidity with which nature has gifted me. There is nobody else in from the outside as yet.

Lagny, Feb. 2.—As I remarked in my yesterday's letter, had I accepted the well-intended advice of friends, that visit to Paris would never have been made. The two cuirassier officers who rode with me into the neutral territory, took leave of me quite pathetically, and when I said, "Au revoir," one of them shook his head significantly. It was rather nervous work riding along a road crowded with Frenchmen, not a friendly Prussian uniform within sight, and one's self so dressed as to be easily enough mistaken for one of the hated race. During the long wait we had at the Porte de la Chapelle, while a dense crowd collected with the desire to get inside, I and my horse were the chief topics of observation. Men laid their heads together, and discussed my personality. I was a Prussian, that was taken for granted. Had I countless cattle in reserve? or had I come to have speech with the authorities as to the further humiliation of Paris? I got into conversation in English with a man who had been in America, but this had no effect in leading my critics to suppose I was an Englishman. "These

Prussians, *sacré!* they know every language under the sun," sententiously remarked an elderly gentleman with a big cabbage under each arm, and a pair of red stripes down his legs. My horse shared with me the public interest. But it was not the interest usually attracted towards horses. There was no criticism as to her points, her probable action, or her soundness. No, "she was a fine fat animal; she must be succulent; how well she would eat." It is very curious how horseflesh has come to be accepted as an ordinary viand, not to be noted as anything out of the common. The day before I entered Paris, when I looked in on M. Saglier, the good pastor of St. Denis, he hospitably asked me to have some dinner. I assenting, he told his servant to "bring in the meat," and I made an assault, with vigour and perseverance, on a rather ragged roast joint which was placed before me, the pastor looking on benignantly the while. I held my tongue till the edge was off my appetite, and then asked the minister what I was eating. "Well," said he, "of course you are eating horse; and a very choice joint it is. I knew the animal well. He was young and plump, and of a grey colour, which it is well known indicates tenderness." The pastor had been eating horse for the last four months, not because he was forced to do so so long, but because he has a numerous dependency of poor people, to aid whom he has had to practise economy.

When I had got just inside the Porte de Santois, I thought for certain I was to be stopped. The Ceinture Railway was close under the *enceinte*, and as I reached the bridge an officer came forward, with his hand raised. As luck would have it, a train came puffing past at the moment. My mare thought proper to go through a variety of fantastic gymnastic feats at this apparition, the officer looking on admiringly. When the train had passed, and she had condescended to come down upon all-fours again,

the officer smiled and patted her shoulder. I smiled, and raised my hat; and somehow I had slidden over the bridge before he had got the hack-jumping idea out of his head and the interception idea into it. I can't say, even after I had passed successfully the good fellow who assailed me with cries of "Cochon!" that I liked the appearance of the Boulevard Magenta. It was densely crowded with soldiers, and some of them might be disagreeably patriotic. But, no; they were all too much busied with their own affairs, getting their pay and discussing events. The closed shops appeared to me to be chiefly eating-houses, all the other shops appeared to be open, although there did not seem to be any trade doing. The bouillon houses, however, at the street-corners, were open, and I learn that their proprietor has had exceptional advantages extended to him.

It surprised me to see so many well-appointed vehicles still in the streets of Paris, with well-conditioned horses. Nor were the omnibuses either few or far between, and their horses were in the best of condition, as were the horses ridden at break-neck speed through the streets by officers who looked, and who probably were, transmogrified *petits crévés*. After visiting the American Legation, where undisguised wonder was expressed at my appearance, I made my way to the Hôtel de St. Honoré, to an old-fashioned and well-known house kept by a worthy Briton of the name of Unthank. Mr. Unthank has had for his boarder throughout the siege Dr. Gordon, our Medical Commissioner in Paris; and he takes pride in asserting, what I believe to be true, that the doctor, under his auspices, has lived better than any other man in Paris. When dinner came it bore out Mr. Unthank's boast. Positively there was a fowl—pretty well, I reckon, the last fowl in Paris. Mr. Unthank was offered

eighty francs for the biped while yet it had its feathers on, but refused it, and so we had him for dinner. I believe this house is the only one in Paris into which horseflesh has not been allowed to enter, and this owing to exceptional circumstances. There are advantages in being a Scotsman. One of these this siege has developed in a curious way. There is some store of oatmeal in Paris. You can make porridge out of oatmeal; and Scotsmen not only eat, but enjoy porridge. Thus Dr. Gordon, a Strathdon man, has supped his luxurious bicker of porridge every morning, while men not born to the manner of porridge gave themselves internal uneasiness by eating the stuff which bears the conventional name of bread. Sharing the origin of Dr. Gordon, I shared with him his bicker of porridge, and, when I had scraped the dish, came to the conclusion that the man who cannot sup porridge deserves to starve. Yet another national dainty was Unthank equal to—a tumbler of such Scotch whiskey-toddy as I had not tasted for months.

I had intended to promenade Paris all night, to make the most of the time necessarily limited. But by ten o'clock the promenade became a solitary one. By nine the dim lights were put out in the kiosks, and were waning in the street-lamps. By half-past the cafés were putting up their shutters, the red-striped waiters looking curiously nondescript. By ten the world of Paris was left to darkness and to me; and so I went to bed. The morning was wet. Would Paris collapse if her streets were not cleaned? There were the scavengers at work in this crisis just as if the Empire was still to the fore, and as if its name was peace; and the shops open in the Rue St. Honoré, and ladies tripping about, and cabs plying, and beggars cadging, and everything as like peace time as could well be imagined, except that everybody

was in uniform, that you saw no food for sale, and did see crowds of women waiting outside the bakers' and the butchers'.

I was inside Paris, but how was I to get out? It was clear I was no use there—quite *de trop*, in fact. People who ought to know shook their heads. I must first get my passport *viséd* at the Embassy. Then I must go to the Préfecture of Police and get a permit, which would probably be refused; and then there was, after all, the Prussian lines to pass. I thought it wise to have the passport *viséd*, in case of accidents. Who could *visé* it? Oh, Mr. Blount, the banker, had just been appointed British Consul. To Mr. Blount's I went. A respectable man told me that was the wrong shop; I must go to the Embassy and get my business done there. To the Embassy I went accordingly. A porter, mopping the stairs, was the sole representative visible of Her Britannic Majesty. He sent me into a room, and presently a little man in slippers arrived, who told me he had been summoned from some cleaning operations upstairs, and was in a muddle. Inside his velveteen coat was concentrated the representation of ambassador, attaché, consul, and the British flag generally, including the lion and the unicorn. With much mental perturbation, arising from thick ink and a defective acquaintance with the art of penmanship, he succeeded in achieving my skeleton credentials, and then said I must go to Mr. Blount and get his signature attached. Rather a scrappy way of getting accredited as a free-born British Christian, I considered, especially when I thought of the big house and the bigger item in the estimates. However, I went to Mr. Blount, who was remarkably civil for a consul, and owned, with ingenuous candour, to an utter ignorance of his new duties. He knew enough, however, to attach

his name in the vicinity of the imposing stamp, and then advised me to go to the Préfecture.

I had had enough of gyrating among officialism, and determined to chauce it. Trotting down the Rue Rivoli I met Dr. Cormac, who, as head of the English ambulance, supported by Mr. Wallace, has been doing very good work. On my right the gardens of the Tuileries were utterly desecrated, ploughed up with innumerable hoof-prints of cattle, scored with tracks of provision waggons. Wooden barracks have been built where dainty flowerpots once were. The Place du Trône has its eastern end blocked by a gigantic barricade, erected, I suppose, *pour passer le temps*; for it is impossible that it could be of any use for defensive purposes. Once outside this, the Vincennes gate stood before me. I pulled up into a walk, and tried to look as if I were doing the most ordinary thing in the world. There was a cordon of soldiers across the narrow passage just inside the gate. One made a half motion for me to halt. I began to whistle and looked the other way. He forsook his purpose. In another minute I was in the broad road outside the Vincennes gate, and was in full ot through the suburb. Presently I came to a fort on my right, the only fort still occupied by the French—a concern of barracks, stone walls, and slated roofs, utterly useless as a defence. The trees of the wood of Vincennes have suffered terribly. A little beyond the fort I came to the forepost line of the Wurtembergers, and chancing to meet an officer I knew, rode through without so much as being challenged. Except her forts, her garrison, and her *enceinte*, it is curious to notice how much of an open town Paris has been all through the siege. The forepost defence line of the French is hardly worth talking of as an obstruction. Here and there, it is true, it is formidable. Around the

Château of Villanteneuse, for instance, there is a series of works which are of a regular fortress character, and of a construction which is creditable to those who made them; but there they stand all alone, unsupported, as French soldiers as well as French works have been so often during this war. So the German patrols were wont quietly to walk round these Villanteneuse works and do their business on the farther side, utterly negating them. Non-continuity is the striking feature everywhere of the French line of defences. Fort Nogent, close on the right of which I passed in my ride to-day, has not to all appearance suffered so much as the St. Denis forts; but I had not time to enter it and make a minute inspection.

Respecting the supply of food, the Special Correspondent at the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia wrote, on the 2nd of February, from Versailles:—

Some anxiety is felt here in regard to the provisioning of Paris. The capitulation was only just in time, for it is found that there was less food by several days' supply than the French authorities supposed. They had imagined they would leave off with a safe margin of bread at any rate between the people and starvation; but it now appears that even bread may give out before the end of this week. The Emperor thinks the case so serious as to warrant sending in six million rations from the German stores from Lagny, and relaxing the rule about the purchase of provisions at a distance by the French in one of the articles of the Convention. Thus, instead of being debarred from purchase in all the territories occupied by the German troops, the French Government will be able to enter several markets not far removed from the circle of the siege operations. I believe Corbeil will be one of the points to which I allude. There are great flour mills there which will be most useful at this

crisis. What with the rations sent in by the Emperor and the modification of the Convention, and the opening of the railway lines to the south, north, and west, we may hope that soon Paris will be out of danger; but the fact that such danger exists, that the Parisians have so early eaten their last crust, explains the yielding up of the forts so long before they were made untenable. Stray supplies here and there in the city, barrels of salt meat in one fort, cases of sardines and bags of biscuit in another, could not prevent the city, as a whole, from being starved into surrender. The line of demarcation has been quietly drawn round Paris, and a chain of German sentries watch the Parisians from five hundred yards outside the *enceinte*. The French, on their side, keep guard at the city gates. Nothing like free intercourse is established yet between Paris and the suburbs. It is understood to be rather the wish of Jules Favre than of M. Bismarck that this blockade should be maintained. Jules Favre is probably anxious to keep away outside influence until after the elections on Sunday next; and the German authorities are very careful about granting passes to enter the city, which may seem like an infraction of the French right to keep out strangers during the armistice. Nevertheless, scores of people run the blockade both ways. The foreign residents who could find a carriage to take them and get permit from the French, have had no great difficulty in passing the German lines; whilst Frenchmen and foreigners have disappeared from sight bound citywards, and by hook or crook have got through the gates. Those who have just come out say that the sufferings, privations, and discouragement are very great. All the excited feeling of the recent struggle has died away into bitter regret that things could not have been otherwise ordered by the men in power. There is more danger from famine than

from the mob, and those who know Paris well think the elections will pass off quietly. The people will have leisure to reflect calmly on the state of affairs, while the French authorities collect their cannon, arms, colours, &c., to hand over to the Germans. There will remain a force of twelve thousand regulars, and between three and four thousand douaniers, Gardes Républicaines, &c., to preserve order in the capital. The soldiers and sailors of the garrison will slide gradually into the condition of prisoners of war, and be ready, should France decide on further resistance, to start for the German fortresses. I find that the Germans still think that whatever happens they are to march through Paris. In the event of the renewal of war they naturally will take possession of the city, and do as they please about marching through; but in the event of peace this wish of theirs will raise a delicate point for negotiators.

Feb. 3.—The strictness of the blockade has been gradually relaxed, and men have walked freely along roads where rifles were pointed at them a few days ago with the sharp command to “halt.” A French peasant can now trudge unhindered from Versailles or St. Germain to the villages round Mont Valérien; he can reach the bridge of Neuilly and stare at the crowd of hungry Parisians who are scrambling for Prussian or provincial loaves. The peasant, that most unmilitary and blockaded of men, stopped at every turn and snubbed on every occasion, can now circulate freely round Paris, except in the forts and batteries, with just two lines of armed men to pass to make him as free as in time of peace. He must get through the line of Prussian sentries on one side of the demarcation, and through the guard which is kept by the French on the other side, and then all Paris lies before him. The peasant with butter or vegetables, bread or poultry, will be welcome among the

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hungry citizens if he can only get through; and if he cannot get through at the bridge of Neuilly, he will, nevertheless, find means to sell his store at an ample profit.

The abandoned villages are waking up to life, and the ruined villages are visited by hundreds of curious inquirers, who seek to ascertain whether this or that building has been destroyed. Sometimes they search more eagerly and sadly. The house has been their own, and they long to know how much of it remains. Sometimes they are only interested as far as concerns the property of Père Bonhomme, or La Veuve Lebrun. "Ah, ha! voici donc! What will the old man say when he sees it?" I have heard them cry before a heap of blackened ruins which had been identified as some neighbour's house. Or one may notice little groups of women who shed tears over their burnt habitations. The men are more self-contained, but have a sullen, despondent look in many cases, as though they foresaw that they should have to begin the world again. It is due to the French people to record that their tone and bearing through these trying scenes are, on the whole, consistent and dignified. France has "taken her punishment like a glutton," as pugilists say; and if her efforts to win have been abortive, she has at least the merit of having suffered willingly and persistently in what she esteemed a sacred cause. I have not heard a quarter so much lamentation over the war among the principal sufferers themselves as may be read in half a dozen periodicals among their neutral neighbours across the Channel. The French seem to be irrepressibly cheerful and hopeful about their country; insomuch that, unless I greatly misjudge them, they will make her again a first-class Power. After the bitter disappointment of hearing that Paris had capitulated, the

people in Versailles took two or three days to rally. Their whole castle in the air had vanished. For a moment they were stunned by the news; but then came their more cheerful mood. They shrugged their shoulders, admitted that it was a bad job about Paris, and began to believe in France again. So with the Parisians who have struggled out through the line of investment, and who may be seen on all the roads leading into the country. Most of them have specimens of the wretched bread which they have lately been eating, and "*à la guerre comme à la guerre*" is the sentiment of the hour. "Monsieur," said one man to us yesterday, "observe this piece of bread, I pray you; it was my ration for a whole day; but that was nothing. If we had only had enough of even such ignoble food, we would have kept the Germans waiting."

I rode along the left bank of the Seine from Sèvres to the Pont de Neuilly yesterday afternoon, and watched the amusing spectacle of the traffic between the opposite shores. The bridge of Sèvres has been partially destroyed, so that at this point every one wishing to cross the river must take boat and be ferried over. There was a German crowd on one side, in uniforms, staring at the French, and a French crowd on the other side, in plain clothes, staring at the Germans; and the boats passing to and fro between them. We could see that those who got to the French side had quite as much trouble with the authorities there as those who steered towards us had with the German officers on the landing-place; but the impression which I derived from watching what occurred was that the majority of the enterprising souls in the boats made good their story, and scrambled through with more or less pushing about and shouting at. The spectators evidently enjoyed to see a man well bullied, in

the way in which those whose feelings have been wrought up to a high pitch of excitement laugh wildly at small jokes when the time of danger has passed. The Germans are of course in high good humour at their success, and the French are relieved to find the struggle at an end. Deeply as many of them mourn their defeat, much as they will all suffer in making good the losses of the war, they have relief from the fearful strain and anxiety of their long defence. I saw hundreds of them on the river side strolling vaguely about to see what could be seen, or fishing with rod and line, in the hope of adding to their scanty store. The left bank of the Seine is strongly guarded by Prussian sentries, who are dotted thickly along the whole distance from Sèvres to the Pont de Neuilly, and blockade-runners are sternly checked in their endeavours to effect a landing on the hither side. I saw one boat, rowed by a couple of women and steered by an old man, come out across the stream to a convenient point near St. Cloud, and land a passenger under the very eyes of two Prussian officers. Up hustled the sentries from right and left. "What do you want? You can't come through; you must go back," were the greetings with which the stranger was received. He bowed, and protested. Two officers intervened, and the stranger proceeded to lay before them documentary evidence that his story, whatever it may have been, was true. I paused a little while to see how the matter would end, and am convinced, from the long delay which followed the first questionings, that the stranger made a good fight of it. He had papers enough with him to have passed half a dozen refugees, and as the boat presently glided back without him, we may assume that he got through.

The hungry people on the bridge at Neuilly afforded a sight not soon to be forgotten. Here were the soldiers

keeping guard, and other soldiers off duty staring at the crowd, and there were the citizens clamouring for bread. The Prussian end of the bridge was held by Landwehr of the Guard, who stood up tall and strong before their foes, a fine specimen of the conquerors for the Parisians to begin by seeing. Carts and waggons, trucks, omnibuses—all kinds of vehicles which could be called into service were assembled at the Prussian end of the bridge to bring passengers or provisions to the boundary line. Some drivers were anxious to cross; others were content to discharge their cargo and return without entering Paris. Bread was the article most in demand. Bread would fetch a good price, and could not be quickly enough supplied. The French crowd was neatly dressed—neatly, at least, for such a crowd in any country; and its avidity for food was out of all proportion to its respectable appearance. Young women with clean white caps and pleasant rosy faces were leaning over the barrier, basket in hand, to beg the Landwehrmen to fetch them some bread—"Would Monsieur be so obliging? *Les militaires* were always so polite. Ah! thank you; two loaves, three if possible; as much as the money will buy." So went the stream of talk, with plenty of rough jokes from the Prussians, with hoarse words of command as over-active citizens were forced back into line, and with shrill cries about nothing in particular from urchins in the crowd. Then a carriage came slowly out, passed the barrier, wound its way through the other carriages that were waiting, and trotted off into the outer world. "Ah!" said the Prussians, "yet more horses in the city! See what meat they had still in reserve." Or, it might be that a carriage went through the other way, cleared the Prussian line after a short discussion, and entered the crowd of Frenchmen which surged to and fro upon the bridge. We could see it pass on up the wide avenue towards the Arc de

Triomphe, attracting less and less attention until it was left to make its way unheeded to the Octroi barrier. The crowd would close up again and clamour again for bread. It was a scene which reversed the ordinary course of trade, for here the would-be purchasers, and not the would-be sellers, were shouting aloud. At one moment the Prussians made an attempt to clear the bridge in a friendly way; but the squad of men sent forward for the purpose were so mercilessly "chaffed" and bantered by the people, that they effected little beyond a slight dispersion of the crowd as they moved along. After much that we had heard of the fierceness of the Parisians, and much that the Parisians had doubtless heard of the brutality of the invaders, it was worth while to notice the easy terms of intercourse which had been established at Neuilly between the embittered foes of the last four months. The Parisians were sensibly accepting their defeat, and making the best of it. The invaders were conducting themselves with the average good nature of soldiers on guard over friends instead of foes.

It seemed but a step from the end of the bridge to the Arc de Triomphe, which towered up grandly at the end of the Avenue, and when I went back as far as the monument at Courbevoie, and looked across the Seine towards the city, the busy crowd could be distinctly seen going and coming between the barriers and the bridge. Stray pedestrians were making their way down to Nanterre, with the inevitable satchel and gaiters of besieged Paris, and with the air of having belonged to an ambulance, but taken off the "brassard." Family parties in carts were also upon the road, bound to different villages within range of Mont Valérien, and the wayside vendors of bread and cognac were driving a busy trade with their small stock. The new comers would hold up their black bread contemptuously beside the fine white loaves of the

wayside merchants. "Aha! mon brave, voilà ce que c'est à Paris." The black bread was compared with the white, and the new comers would stop to buy a slice and eat it up voraciously. Again, I must notice the unusual effect of seeing well-dressed people hankering for such simple fare. Mont Valérien is hidden from sight by the shoulder of the hill above Reuil, and here the "Mill Battery" came usefully into play, to secure the French position on that side. I could see scores of Germans exploring the battery as I rode down the village street, and had a moment's view of a parade of German troops in the barrack-yard of Reuil. One end of this place had been held by the besieged, the other by the besiegers, so that the houses were somewhat knocked about; but there was less destruction in Reuil than in Bougival, a mile and a half farther on, where many French shells had fallen. Bougival had been cleared of its inhabitants during the latter part of the siege, so that there was a complete re-awakening for the village when once the blockade was removed. I noticed several well-dressed people wandering about from one burnt house to another, and gathered that they knew the owners by name at least; for here, as at Sèvres and St. Cloud, they were speaking of such and such persons, who had lost everything; who had been lucky and only lost part of their goods; or who really had nothing to complain of, for they would be all right again when the rooms were washed and the windows mended. The poorer inhabitants of Bougival were already back in full force, scraping together heaps of rags and rubbish, and clearing the scene, as it appeared, for future repairs. I saw one man who had stuffed an old mattress into a hole in the wall where a shell had entered, thrust his jacket into a broken window to keep out the draught on that side; and he was actually whistling as he sat in the doorway mending

a broken chair. A little way farther there were two women, mother and daughter, who complained that the scrap of furniture left in their abode had been changed during the siege for some one else's chairs and table. "But," said they, "it does not much matter, for when the people come back to whom these things belong, they will perhaps find our furniture in their house, and then we can exchange with them." They were not much depressed by the confusion which prevailed, and smiled at the odd way in which *ces Messieurs les Prussiens* had mixed everything up.

From Paris itself the Special Correspondent wrote, on the 4th of February:—

I was awoke this morning at four o'clock by beat of drum. Again and again the drum went round, disturbing my innocent slumbers. Some provisions had come into Paris—not much, but enough to create a scramble in the market, which was besieged by early buyers from two o'clock in the morning. About three o'clock—that is, of course, long before the markets at this season of the year are open to purchasers—the authorities became anxious; and at four o'clock the drum went round to collect the National Guards, whose business it is to preserve order. Long before day-dawn great crowds were assembled to contend for butter and eggs, carrots and onions, whittings and soles. The sale at daybreak went off briskly but peaceably, and the Parisians were in many quarters to-day able to add a few luxuries to their repast—an egg or a pat of butter.

I went to take breakfast at the *Café Voisin*. The head-waiter came up to me to announce a State secret. It is a secret which he announces to everybody; but he has such a style about him that you fancy for a moment that you are particularly favoured. Also he gives such an air

of importance to his communication—his eyes sparkling with pleasure, and enlarging with the grandeur of his information—that you are quite certain that the destinies of the day are in his hands. He is the most invaluable of head-waiters in this way. You go into the Café Voisin as a matter of business, meaning to get through a meal which has, perhaps, no great attractions for you, but which nevertheless must be eaten. Perhaps you are pre-occupied with important news, political or military. The head-waiter—his eyes tearful with appetite—recalls you to fact, and makes you believe (till you begin to eat it) that the real event of the day is roast ass or stewed cow. He came to me this morning, his face beaming with intelligence of the infinite. Before he could speak he chuckled, as if he had a miracle on his mind—something not to be believed—which the sceptic before him would laugh to scorn. The infinite, the incredible, the almost unspeakable, which made this supreme waiter hesitate with emotion, was—a fried whiting. As if his feelings were too much for him, and he could not stand the jesting which he anticipated at the mere mention of fresh fish, he pointed with triumph, before he could receive an answer, to the sideboard in the centre of the room. There were ranged three large silver trays. On one were rows of raw whittings ready to be cooked; on another, rows of smoked herrings; on the third, a collection of soles and turbot. I asked for the prices. A small sole would be ten francs; a whiting would be two francs; a herring would be a franc and a half. The convoys of provisions which have arrived have as yet been very scanty—enough to add a few luxuries to the tables of the rich, but not to touch the necessities of the poor. It is said that in one of the districts of Paris this week the ration for a family of three persons was three herrings for three days; and that in another district there was nothing to distribute

at the butcher's shop but vinegar and oil. The people, however, are full of expectation of good things to come, and I think that many mouths are watering for the good things which are to come from England. Whenever I meet a Frenchman I have to give him an immense amount of small talk as to the nature of "Yorck" hams, and as to the characteristics of cheeses from Stilton, Cheshire, and Gloucester. A Frenchman gets quite excited just now if you talk to him about ham or cheese. If there be any truth in that old doctrine of the transmigration of souls, I fancy the Frenchman will turn mouse, he is so fond of cheese. But how can I answer all his inquiries? "What is double Gloucester?" he asks, with pleasing hopes; "why double?" He is dreadfully disappointed when I tell him I do not know. My ignorance on the subject is a proof to him of the unreasoning nature of the English mind. These English eat double Gloucester, and they never inquire how and why it is double. "There never was a people so illogical," thinks the Frenchman. "They were all against us in the beginning of the war, and now they are all in our favour, sending us these provisions. Of course they have a reason for it. They want our help in that Black Sea business. But what fools they were not to foresee that they would want our help as against Russia; and what selfish fools they are to care for us only so long as we can be of immediate use to them. Well, we will thank them for their victuals, which we will eat with a will. No doubt the coming hams and cheeses are good. But spite of ham, and spite of cheese, the English and French alliance is at an end."

It is not merely the ignorant Frenchman of the streets and boulevards who declares the English and French alliance at an end. Even educated men who lean to English views—such as M. John Lemoine—say the same thing;

and it is doubtful if any amount of comestibles sent over from England now will change the opinion. For, in truth, if you will read the article in the *Officiel* of this morning, you will see that the Government seem to regard the provisions coming from England almost as a right—only a fair return for all the hospitality exercised in Paris. The Parisians, it must be observed, have a very lively sense of their own hospitality. They are always talking of Paris as the most hospitable of cities, for no other reason that I know of except that it has the most hotels and the most tempting restaurants. The truth is, that Paris is not more hospitable than London; and neither London nor Paris can show anything like the hospitality which one will find in half-peopled regions, where the inhabitants, be they savage or civilized, are only too glad to get hold of a stranger for company, and to entertain him for days and weeks. If by hospitality is to be understood simply the entertainment of strangers, then it must be admitted that Paris is the most entertaining, therefore the most hospitable, city in the world. But the dictionaries generally give one the idea that hospitality means more than this; that it implies gratuitous entertainment; and most of us who have been in Paris are under the impression that, much as we have been entertained in the famous city, we have had to pay pretty well for our entertainment. It seems, therefore, that the Parisians might welcome the kindly offerings of London as a free gift in token of good will, and need not be so forward to set them off against the hospitalities of Paris, which are always paid for in ready money upon the spot. The fact is, that Paris is irritable just now, and does not at all like the idea of being in any way indebted to England. There are thousands upon thousands of Frenchmen who imagine that the Anglo-French alliance has been a one-sided benefit for England, and that

especially the Treaty of Commerce has been an injury to France and a great gain to perfidious Albion. The result is, that the Government here is strongly urged to abrogate the Treaty of Commerce; and M. Dorian, who has entered upon the duties of Minister of Commerce in the absence of M. Magnin, has even, we are told, proposed to give the proper notices to the English Government by which the Treaty may be annulled at the end of a year. Whatever be the real opinion of the French Government, I believe it has decided not to adopt the views of M. Dorian.

As soon as the terms of the Armistice Convention became known, the first question asked by politicians was, "How will it be received at Bordeaux?" The answer was not long delayed. Tidings of the capitulation of Paris reached Bordeaux from England before M. Jules Favre's official despatch on the subject could reach the Delegate Government, and provoked M. Gambetta to publish a semi-official note in the provinces, to the effect that it was incredible that the Paris Government should have surrendered the defences of Paris without consultation with Bordeaux. When the official news was received, M. Gambetta published a proclamation, in which, after announcing that "Paris the impregnable, forced and vanquished by famine, had succumbed, but that the city remained intact, as a last homage wrested by the power of moral grandeur from the barbarians," he added, "but, as if our ill-fortune had resolved to crush us, something more sinister and painful than the fall of Paris has come upon us. Unknown to us, without informing us and without consulting us, an armistice has been signed, of which we have but too late learned the guilty thoughtlessness, which surrenders to the Prussian troops departments occupied by our soldiers, and imposes upon us the obligation to remain inactive for three weeks, in order to

convoke a National Assembly in the sad circumstances in which our country finds itself."

This proclamation was followed in a day or two by another semi-official note in the Bordeaux journals, denouncing the partial character of the armistice as the cause of the ruin of General Bourbaki's army, which was by that time accomplished. M. Gambetta, however, accepted the armistice, and with it the obligation to convoke a National Assembly, but intending to make of each a means of prolonging the war. His proclamation, which ended with the summons "To arms! To arms!" was followed by a decree, in which, after declaring it to be "just that all the accomplices of the régime which commenced by the crime of the 2nd of December, to terminate by the capitulation of Sedan, should be struck by the same political downfall as the accursed dynasty, of which they were the guilty instruments," made ineligible for election to the Assembly all persons who, from the 2nd of December, 1851, until the 4th of September, 1870, had accepted the functions of Minister, Senator, Councillor of State, or Prefect, and all who had accepted official candidatures.

M. Jules Favre sent M. Jules Simon to Bordeaux to bring his impetuous colleague to reason, but M. Gambetta was not to be controlled. A decree was therefore issued at Paris expressly annulling that promulgated at Bordeaux, and restoring freedom of election; whereupon M. Gambetta resigned his functions, dissolving his connection with a Government with which, as he declared, "he had no ideas or hopes in common." The language in which the members of the Government replied to M. Gambetta's reproaches was very dignified. "We do not admit," they said, in their decree, "that arbitrary restrictions can be imposed upon the suffrage. We have fought against the Empire and its practices, and we do not intend to revive them by instituting a system of official candidates by means of elimination. Great mistakes may have been committed,

and heavy responsibilities may flow therefrom; nothing can be more true, but the misfortunes of the country efface everything by its extreme need; and, moreover, by lowering ourselves to the condition of mere party actors to proscribe our former antagonists, we should have the shame and the sorrow of wounding those who have fought and bled by our sides. To recall the memories of past dissensions at a time, when the enemy treads our blood-stained soil is to retard by their rancours the great task of the deliverance of the country. We regard principles as superior to expedients. We do not wish that the first decree of convocation of the Republican Assembly in 1871 should be an act of mistrust directed against the electors. To them belongs the sovereignty; let them exercise it without weakness, and the country may be saved."

While France was discussing the terms of the armistice and the prospect of an honourable peace, the Army of the East, of which, since the incapacity of General Bourbaki, General Clinchamp had taken the command, was suffering the last horrors of defeat. Driven like a flock of sheep into a mountainous country, where even well-found and well-disciplined troops would have needed good leading for their safety, hemmed in upon the Swiss frontier without hope of escape, pressed closer and closer by a relentless enemy, the army lost provision-waggons by the hundred, the men walking they hardly knew whither, over icy roads or through the deep snow, day after day. About 15,000 were made prisoners, and 80,000 crossed the Swiss frontier, under a convention signed by General Clinchamp with the Federal authorities. Most of these unfortunate men—surely the most to be pitied of any of the victims of the war—arrived in Switzerland in a state which defies description. Their clothes were rent, and dropping off them; their feet and hands were frostbitten. A Correspondent who saw them reported that "in all the shrunk features and crouching gait told of gnawing hunger, while

the deep cough and hoarse voice bore witness to long nights spent on snow and frozen ground. Some had tied bits of wood under their bare feet to protect them from the stones; others wore wooden *sabots*; hundreds had no socks, and, when they had, they were merely of thin cotton; others, who appeared well shod, would show a soleless or heelless boot—the exposed part of the foot, once frozen, being now a wound crusted with dirt. For weeks none had washed or changed their clothes, or removed their boots. Their hands were blacker than any African's. Some had lost their toes, the limbs of others were so frozen that every movement was agony. The men stated that for three days they had had neither food nor fodder served out to them, and that before that they often got only one loaf between eight men." One corps, the 24th, escaped, and regained Lyons; but, with this exception, such was the melancholy fate of the army led by the brave and brilliant Bourbaki. It was ill-organized, ill-formed, and execrably led; for the officers of the General's staff proved themselves ignorant of the very roads of their own country, and continually compromised the safety of the corps by their mistakes. Yet such as it was, its capabilities, or what were deemed such, caused for the first fortnight of the year much real anxiety at Versailles, and its defeat in the battles of January 15, 16, and 17 was commemorated by the German Emperor by the bestowal of pre-eminent honours and rewards upon General Werder, its commander. On the 18th of January the Emperor sent the Oak-leaf for the Order of Merit, which General Werder had already received. On the 20th he sent 150 Orders of the Iron Cross for distribution among the army, and the following telegram:—

"Versailles, Jan. 20.

"General von Werder,—Your heroic three days' victorious defence of your position, in the rear of a besieged

fortress, is one of the greatest feats of arms in all history. I express my Royal thanks, my deepest acknowledgments, and bestow upon you the Grand Cross of the Red Eagle, with the Sword, as a proof of this acknowledgment.—Your grateful King,

“WILLIAM.”

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE elections that were to make France once more a self-governing nation were accomplished with an ease and facility very remarkable, when the disorganized state of the communications, and the distractions of every kind by which the country was rent, are considered. To facilitate the result, the German telegraph offices throughout France were ordered to receive and despatch the telegrams of the French authorities relative to the electoral operations; and the censorship of the press, which the German authorities had exercised with unsurpassed rigour in the occupied districts, was for the time suspended.

The Emperor Napoleon issued a manifesto from Wilhelmshöhe on the 8th, in which he spoke of himself as one betrayed by fortune, and said that, although he had preserved, so long as the armies of France and Germany confronted one another, that profound silence which is misfortune's mourning, he could no longer be silent in face of the disasters of his country. He then proceeded to "demand from those who had usurped power an account of the blood shed without necessity, the ruin heaped up without reason, the resources of the country squandered without control." The material part of the address, which was exceedingly verbose, appears to have been the passage in which the Emperor said,— "In the presence of the calamities which afflict us there is no room for personal ambition. But so long as the people, regularly assembled

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in its *comitia*, shall not have manifested its will, it will be my duty to address myself to the nation as its real representative, and to tell it that all that may be done without its direct participation is illegitimate. There is but one Government which has issued from the national sovereignty, and which, rising above the selfishness of parties, has the strength to heal your wounds, to reopen your hearts to hope, and your profaned churches to your prayers, and to bring back industry, concord, and peace to the bosom of the country." The Emperor would seem to have intended in these words to protest beforehand against the legitimacy of any government that might issue from the resolutions of a Representative Assembly instead of being established by a *plebiscitum*. His proclamation, however, was unheeded. France returned an Assembly which was Conservative, Orleanist, Legitimist, Republican, or anything but Imperialist. Alsace and Lorraine were allowed to elect representatives, and chose such of their fellow-citizens as had displayed most public spirit during the war. The candidate who was chosen by the largest number of constituencies was M. Thiers, who was elected in no fewer than eighteen departments, a fact of which the Assembly at its meeting apparently took note for its guidance.

The National Assembly met at Bordeaux, for a preliminary sitting, on the 12th of February, and, although not nearly all its members were present, resolved to constitute itself immediately. On the following day the Assembly held its first public sitting, when M. Jules Favre, in the name of his colleagues both at Bordeaux and Paris, resigned their powers as the Government for National Defence into the hands of the Representatives. He said,—“We have borne the burden of government, but we have no other desire, under existing circumstances, than to be able to place our temporary plans in the hands of the National Assembly. Thanks to your patriotism and reunion, we

hope that the country, having been taught by misfortune, will know how to heal her wounds, and to reconstitute the national existence. We no longer hold any power. We depend entirely upon your decision. We confidently expect the constitution of the new and legitimate powers." M. Favre then announced that he and his colleagues would remain at their posts to maintain respect for the laws until the establishment of the new Government.

The Special Correspondent at Bordeaux, describing this sitting, wrote, on the same evening:—

The first public sitting of the French National Assembly was held at two o'clock to-day. About half the Assembly (upwards of 800) were present. The theatre of Bordeaux, one of the most beautiful and best proportioned (though by no means one of the largest) in the world, is admirably suited to the purpose. The members sit in the pit and in the surrounding stalls. The boxes are devoted to the public and the press. The President's chair is on the stage, exactly in the centre of the line of footlights. The tribune—at present an ugly deal pulpit, but which will probably be made more sightly by the addition of some drapery—is in the place of the prompter's box. On either side of the tribune are seats for the shorthand writers; and the secretaries sit on the stage, on the right and left of the chair. A goodly array of ushers, brought from Paris and wearing chains, enhance the dignity of the Assembly. Immediately after, Count Benoît d'Azy, a bland old gentleman verging upon eighty, took the chair by seniority, MM. Jules Favre, Jules Simon, Emmanuel Arago, Eugène Pelletan, Garnier-Pagès, Glais-Bizoin, and Magnin entered the House together, walked up the centre of the pit, and took their seats on the second row on the right-hand side, which must for the present be called the Ministerial bench.

Garibaldi, who was loudly cheered by the public and the National Guard as he entered the theatre, sat on one of the back benches of the pit. Having heard that the majority intended to oppose his admission, he handed up to the President a short letter, the reading of which by Count Benoît d'Azy formed the commencement of the proceedings, in which he said he had been elected in several French departments on Republican principles, but that under the circumstances he judged it expedient to resign. This announcement was received with a tranquillity which gave but small indication of the row that was shortly to follow.

M. Jules Favre then rose, and in a very few words, delivered from his place, said, that under cruel and unparalleled circumstances, he, on behalf of himself and his colleagues, begged to resign into the hands of the National Assembly the power which they had exercised since September 4. They would continue courageously to perform their duty till the moment—which they earnestly hoped might not long be delayed—when the Assembly would appoint their successors. He wished to state that he must start that evening for Paris, to conduct delicate negotiations, the object of which he would explain at a future period. Unanimous sympathetic applause followed this short declaration.

When the formality of naming the bureaux had been gone through, and I rather think after the President had declared the sitting at an end, General Garibaldi advanced towards the tribune, and M. Esquiros, deputy for Marseilles, exclaimed in a loud voice, "Garibaldi asked to speak some time ago, hear him!" A tumultuous scene ensued. Vehement cries of "Hear Garibaldi!" were met by others, equally energetic, of "No Garibaldi!" "No Italian!" "Let him hold his tongue!" The public in the tribunes took part with Garibaldi, and several

National Guards said, "It is infamous. These men are sold!" One man, with a long black beard, roared out from an upper box, "You rural majority, listen to the voice of the towns!" In the midst of the confusion the President put on his hat, and gave orders to clear the galleries of strangers. There was no occasion to obey the order, as Garibaldi gave up the attempt to speak, and members and strangers all went out together. As Garibaldi left the House and got into his carriage, accompanied by General Bordone and two aides-de-camp, he had quite an ovation. He said a few words only, to the effect that he had come to France to fight for the Republic; that he should have been happy to serve Republican France in any way; but that his mission was now over, and that he should start that night for his home in Caprera. Loud cries of "Vive Garibaldi! Vive la République!" were raised by the National Guard and the public, and the General was escorted to the Hôtel de Nantes by a great following.

I must say, in extenuation of the great disgrace to France that the chivalrous Garibaldi was refused a hearing in a French Assembly, that he did not come forward at the proper time. There was something illogical in resigning at the beginning of the sitting and then asking to speak at the end of it. Even the clerical deputies, who were delighted to show their spite against him, would not, I think, have refused him a hearing had they not relied on the technical objection that the House had risen before he approached the tribune.

The most striking, and at the same time the most unexpected, result of the late elections is the marvellous success of M. Thiers. He is, in my opinion, by far the most able statesman in France, but he never till now was popular with the masses. And I know nothing so creditable to the instinct of universal suffrage as the

fact, that while there has been no sufficient time to prepare for the elections, and telegraphic and postal communications are difficult, an immense proportion of the constituency of France, seeing that hard conditions of peace are necessary, has fixed upon M. Thiers as the man who, better than any other, can negotiate the ultimate terms, and recommend them to be accepted in language so cunningly poised as to be less hurtful to French vanity than that which any other man could command. If France is ruined, she is at least sure to get from M. Thiers *un enterrement de première classe*. Some of the papers conjecture that M. Thiers will be elected for as many as five-and-twenty constituencies. It is quite possible. He stands at this moment member for Bordeaux, Brest, Havre, Poitiers, Ayen, Saint Etienne, Digne, and districts in the departments of the Aude, Dordogne, Charente Inférieure, Hérault, Lot-et-Garonne, and Loire. I now understand why M. Thiers lately told his friends that he was no longer an Orleanist, but a Republican. He aspires to become the President of a French Republic, and he has a very good chance to realize his ambition.

On the 16th the Assembly, by an immense majority, elected its President in the person of M. Grévy, a moderate Republican of long experience in public life. A very large proportion of the deputies were well advanced in years, and they exhibited, in more than one instance, a marked preference for men of an age at which the judgment prevails over the passions. On the 17th the Assembly proceeded to the most important duty which it had to perform prior to the negotiations for peace, and elected M. Thiers Chief of the Executive power. M. Thiers received the same evening the congratulations of the Ministers of England, Austria, and Italy, and was immediately called to enter

upon the functions of his office. At the sitting of the Assembly, M. Keller, a deputy, laid on the table a declaration, signed by the deputies of the Lower and Upper Rhine, Meurthe, and Moselle departments, in which lay the territories understood to be required by Germany praying the Assembly to take it into consideration. The declaration was as follows:—

“The National Assembly, France, and Europe, which are witnesses of the exactions of Prussia, cannot permit the completion of an act which would rend Alsace and Lorraine from France. We are, and will for ever remain, French, in good as well as in ill fortune. We have sealed with our own blood the indissoluble pact which unites us to France, and we affirm once more, in the depth of all our trials, our immovable loyalty towards the Fatherland. France cannot abandon those who will not be separated from her. The National Assembly, sprung from universal suffrage, could not concede demands tending to destroy the nationality of a whole population. Neither can the People, in its electoral colleges, allow it. As little can Europe confirm these criminal attempts, and let a whole people be treated as a herd of tame beasts. Peace, in consideration of a cession of territory, will never be a durable peace, but merely a momentary truce, soon to be followed by another war. As to ourselves, inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine, we are ready to resume fighting, and therefore we shall beforehand hold as null and void any offers, treaty, votes, or plebiscite which would have for effect to sever Alsace and Lorraine from France. We proclaim our right to remain united to French soil, and we formally engage to defend our honour.”

After having read this declaration, M. Keller urged the Assembly to oppose moral to mere brute force, and to proclaim the inviolability of the connection with Alsace and

Lorraine. "We hold forth our hand to you," added M. Keller, in conclusion; "do not refuse to hold forth yours." M. Keller's speech was loudly cheered by the whole House.

M. Henri Rochefort demanded that the proposal should at once be referred to the bureaux, so that the majority of the House might give the negotiators imperative orders, or leave them perfect freedom to conduct the negotiations.

M. Thiers then rose, and said that from the bottom of his heart he fully shared M. Keller's feelings, adding that, in presence of the grave circumstances in which they were placed, it was the duty of the House to adopt the only decision becoming its dignity. He said, "It is not to-morrow, but at once, that we must discuss and vote on this proposal. The House cannot await the constitution of a Government, but must itself decide, in the full enjoyment of the privileges, the responsibility it is to assume. It is important that its wishes should be known. As to myself (added M. Thiers), I have devoted my whole life to my country, and I am still prepared to devote all my efforts to France. But it is the duty of the House to settle this question. Let us not wait twenty-four hours, but let us meet immediately in our bureaux and declare our wishes." The President then consulted the House, which decided in favour of M. Thiers's suggestion, and the sitting was suspended. M. Keller's proposals were reported on, and the Assembly, instead of coming to a decisive resolution, adopted one expressing its sympathies with the population of the East, but handing over the declaration of the deputies for Alsace and Lorraine to the negotiators for peace, to be dealt with as they might find practicable. From the first hour of its meeting it was evident that the Assembly had made up its mind to acknowledge all the importance of accomplished facts.

On the 19th M. Thiers appeared in the Assembly, and read a speech in which he stated that, though saddened by

the painful task imposed upon him by the country, he accepted it with obedience, devotion, and love, sentiments of which France stood all the more in need, forasmuch as she was unfortunate—more unfortunate than at any former period of her history. But, he added, she is still great, young, rich, and full of resources, and will always remain a lasting monument of human energy. M. Thiers then announced that in selecting the members of the Ministry he had been guided solely by the public esteem they enjoyed, and their public character and capacities. The following was the list:—M. Dufaure, Minister of Justice; M. Jules Favre, Foreign Affairs; M. Picard, Interior; M. Jules Simon, Public Instruction; M. Lambrecht, Commerce; General Le Flô, War; Admiral Pothuan, Marine; M. de Larcy, Public Works. M. Thiers said that he did not lay down any programme; but under the circumstances there was only one line of policy to follow. It was absolutely necessary to put an end to the evils afflicting the country and to terminate the occupation by the enemy. The country had need of peace, which must be courageously discussed, and only accepted if honourable. M. Thiers also announced the reconstitution of the Councils-General and the municipalities by fresh elections. The Government would devote all its powers to pacify and reorganize the country, to revive credit, and reorganize labour; nothing was more pressing than that task. "I cannot imagine," he said, "that any one can occupy himself with the Constitutional question while France is debating in the grasp of the enemy. Such is our policy. Every man of sense, be he a Monarchist or a Republican, can work usefully for the interest of the country, so that it may at the proper time declare under what form of Government it desires to exist, and then, with the full knowledge of its wants, we can decide our destiny, and that not merely by a majority, but by the national will. Such is the policy to which my

colleagues and I devote ourselves. To give your assistance to a policy whose only objects are the interests of the country will be to confer the strongest power upon your negotiators." This speech was loudly cheered.

M. Jules Favre then rose, and said that the Government had deemed it necessary to unite Parliamentary powers with those of the Executive, and proposed, therefore, that, in order to facilitate the negotiations, the Assembly should appoint a Committee of fifteen deputies to proceed at once to Paris, who would be in constant communication with the negotiators. The latter would be empowered to treat in the name of the country, and the Commission would be informed of the negotiations, and would subsequently report thereupon to the Assembly. The Commission was appointed, and the Assembly, at the suggestion of M. Thiers, resolved to suspend its sittings during the negotiations. MM. Thiers and Jules Favre, with M. Picard, then left for Paris, in order afterwards to negotiate with Count Bismarck at Versailles.

While these transactions were taking place at Bordeaux, Paris was occupied with the interests peculiar to its own unique condition. It was still invested by the enemy—the only city so invested in France. The German guns were pointed towards its *enceinte*; German officers *viséd* the permission to pass in and out; and a German army threatened to make a triumphal march through its streets.

The following letter, from the Correspondent who during the siege was with the Crown Prince of Saxony's army, was written on the 8th of February, and describes a visit to Paris:—

Before I got into St. Denis the weather had changed into an abominable drizzling rain, under the malign influence of which the forts, sulky-looking at the best of times, looked very gloomy indeed. As for St. Denis itself,

what between mud ruins, shell-holes, swarms of passing French that cumbered every foot of the road, *market-enders* bawling and swearing in German dashed with French—every German in these parts now engrafts French words on his mother-tongue—the place was one to be got out of as soon as possible. How quickly the Von Schwartzhoffs, Saxon-province men, have settled down in the place, made themselves at home, and established kindly relations with the natives! It is nothing, as you ride into St. Denis, to meet a group of French with a couple of Prussian soldiers forming part of it, carrying the baskets or bags of the women folk, and making desperate efforts to be conversible as they walk on. I saw more than furious flirtation going on as I rode through yesterday, the French girl giggling with pleasure at the half-understood compliments, eked out with pantomime, which the big man in the helmet was paying her with a clumsy grace. But they don't confine their attentions to the young women, these helmeted family soldiers. I suppose it must be from some tender recollection of an humble old woman away somewhere in the Fatherland that this smart young under-officer is assiduously arming along the crowded street this shambling half-blind old woman in the strange bonnet and the inevitable green umbrella—the old lady's cracked voice trembling with gratitude as she pours a voluble stream of French into the ears of one who, it is plain, is not comprehending a word of what she utters. But although the German garrison and St. Denis have become friendly—very friendly—still the German rule is so to arrange matters that no dislocation of friendship should take them unawares. So the first barricade in the principal street has had two pretty embrasures neatly scooped out of it, and behind these embrasures stand two trim field-pieces, looking up the street with a gaze

very suggestive of a clean sweep if need were. This suggestion is pointed by the shrapnel shells in the boxes which the artillerymen are overhauling, just to see that all is right. I noticed, by the way, a statement in a contemporary that the Prussian artillery had neither shrapnel shells nor time fuses. They have both—the time fuse being fitted to the shrapnel shell, which are of all calibres, from the shells for the field artillery (used with so much effect at Gravelotte) to the big 52-pounder shells which I have seen lying ready for use in the battery at La Barre.

There is no want of food now in St. Denis; where the want lies is as regards the money to buy it wherewithal. A few of the rich inhabitants are trying what they can to stem the torrent of misery, but they are utterly unable to cope with it with any success. You can buy mutton for fifteen sous a pound, and beef for twenty sous; but then if you have got never so much as a single sou, the prices might as well be ten times as much. In their rough hearty way the German soldiers are doing a great deal to help to stave off starvation; but the place is full of misery of the most abject kind. The station of St. Denis is already in full working order, and passengers are forwarded from it, although the class of carriage is not guaranteed. I saw a batch of people start for the La Chapelle terminus on a train of flat open trucks. No tickets are as yet issued on the Northern Railway nearer than Villiers le Bel, but so long as you are allowed to travel, a ticket is not one of the necessities of life.

It was a strange scene on the forepost line. The hour was about half-past five when I reached it. As I understand, the nominal hour for closing intercommunication is six; but on the German side the living barricade, in the shape of a cordon of soldiers, had been put up at five instead of

six. In consequence a dense mass of disappointed people had accumulated, complaining bitterly. Behind the folks on foot were long lines of carriages, and the number was being continually added to. It was indeed an important question for many. They lived in St. Denis; they had no place to go to if they went back to Paris, and besides, by the time they could get back the Paris gates would be closed. Were they to pass the night on the plain? I thought the Prussians were rather stern about the matter. Cavalrymen, with horses that reared imposingly, rode continually across the front in a succession of plunges, driving the people back, as I have seen a troop of dragoons clear Dame Street, in Dublin, on "St. Patrick's day in the morning." On behalf of a gentleman in charge of an International Society's ambulance waggon, I appealed to the officer on duty; but "I have my instructions" was the response, which no one could challenge. I may mention by the way that the members of this ambulance, whose curious relative position to their sick and wounded I explained in a previous letter, have obtained permission to circulate between St. Denis and the plain, and even to go into Paris; the permission being, of course, subject to the ordinary restrictions. As it was granted on my representations to head-quarters, I am none the worse pleased to mention the circumstance. There is a regular and orderly system of examining passes at the point where the road cuts into the glacis of the *enceinte*. There I found an officer who spoke both German and English, and who comically grumbled that his linguistic accomplishments seemed to doom him to permanence in his present position. A trying position truly. Had I not already seen that everybody was trying to get out of Paris, I should have certainly said that everybody was trying to get into it. Very civil was the polyglot officer, and I found myself inside La Chapelle ever

so much sooner than I had anticipated. My first visit was to the terminus of the Northern Railway. Paris is right grateful to England for what she has done in the way of provisioning her. The memory is blotted out of rankling irritation because we did not interfere on behalf of our "anciently;" all the bitterness that fell to our lot as neutrals has sweetened into a thankful geniality. As I talked German with the French officer at the gate, some of those who stood within earshot remarked, "He is a Prussian." "No, sirs," struck in the officer; "he is an Englishman." Why, as I am a modest man and given to blushing, they actually gave me three cheers—these blouses by the gate. Intellect, feeling, sympathy, what not—all very well in certain circumstances; but when you find a man starving, the way to get at him is *vid* a full belly.

"Why, they have got over it already!" Such was the remark I made to myself as I rode through Paris in the dusk—a Paris no more like the Paris I had seen a week before than is Niobe to a clown grinning through a horse-collar. Paris has in a great measure recovered her spirits, and with them her complacency. The general population looks no more as if all was lost. Groups form and converse—they even enliven into gesticulation. The wine-shops get up quite a creditable illumination, and they are the reverse of empty. But they are not so full as are the public soup-kitchens, from which, as I ride past, I reason that the contents of the twenty-seven trains have not quite diffused themselves so widely as to bring plenty into every household, and there still are cries outside the bakers' shops; but there is something better to wait for than in the old days. True the bread is still brown; but it is not like glue, jam, starch, molasses, brown paper, billsticker's paste, and printer's ink blocked together, as it was the other day. There is

in it a goodly proportion of wholesome British flour, and it is a toothsome morsel compared to the stuff that I loathed here the other day. There are many more shutters down from the shop-fronts than on the occasion of my first visit. It is true there is not much food about yet, and prices are "famine;" but still the look ahead is towards a harbour of plenty pretty soon, not to misery, cold, hunger, bombshells, and despair. So Paris has got over the terrible twinge which the surrender gave her at first, and has owned to herself that things are looking up. "After all," says Paris, "I do well to get rid of my moping humour, and to abjure my intention of jumping into the Seine and finding my way into the Morgue. It cut me very deeply, no doubt, to have to sign that convention; but only just think what I have braved, done, and suffered. You can't in common decency refuse to own that I am at least something of a heroine; that I have deserved well of my country and of my traditional reputation. Well, *vive la gloire!* I have the glory if I have not the success; so let me smooth my face and pluck my spirits a bit, and go out for a walk on the boulevards, and once more assert the tongue-gift I am endowed with." Who can blame Paris if she reasons thus, providing only her tongue-gift, her *gloire*, and her shortness of memory do not combine to make her forgetful of the terrible ordeal she has gone through? Keep that memory fresh in the mind of Paris, and you may be easy about any more war on the part of France that Paris can help. Even now, while the last act of the tragedy seems thickening, and there is the possibility of a hitch and a postponement in the dropping of the curtain, Paris wants peace at almost any price, and wishes Gambetta dead. "No more fighting for us, thank you." I don't believe, if the war is continued in the south, that half a dozen Frenchmen

will quit Paris to take part in it. Over the Mairie of La Chapelle hung a white flag as I passed, blazoned with the inscription, "La Patrie est en danger; Formation des compagnies de march; Appel aux volontaires." Bless you, it might have been a Hebrew text for all that anybody regarded it. The *patrie* and the marching regiments might go hang, if the provision trains would only come in fast enough into the Terminus du Nord. Their speedy advent is indeed still wanted badly. There was no bread distributed yesterday in the arrondissement of Passy, and turbulent Belleville exhibited a scarcity. Dr. Innes has seen to the ambulances with a zeal and discretion that cannot be too highly commended. That omnibus of his, which must be like the wizard's inexhaustible hat, is talked about everywhere. How he pulled out of it first himself; then rabbits, turkeys, loaves, ham, vegetables, four sheep (I don't know if they were alive), and a quantity of little odds and ends, in the shape of chests of Liebig and other small deer! How he consorted with Dr. Gordon, and how the energetic pair bustled out the good things all round the ambulances, going the length, indeed, in their urgency, of requisitioning the carriage-horse of the Ambassador of a foreign Power! But no doubt you have heard of all this already, and also of the unobtrusive charities towards distressed Britons in Paris of Mr. Blount, who is now our interim Consul. I hear he has given away thus more than 3,000*l*.

General Vinoy still continues to reside at the Louvre, where also is Trochu. Both seem anxious to have their cases put favourably before the world, and it is likely enough there is a little rivalry. Vinoy is the more capable man of the two seemingly, knowing how to hold his tongue, and also hold his hand, when it is not wise to speak or to smite. Yesterday he was visited in a white

heat by General Richard, who fulminated furiously against the roughs in Versailles for having insulted him and abused him before the Provisional Government. "If the scoundrels do so again," quoth the irate Richard, "I will draw my revolver, and shoot down some of them." "Well, General," replied Vinoy, with an Abraham Lincoln sententiousness, "there are times when a man's revolver is best in his pocket."

The *entente cordiale* between the authorities is not on the increase, rather the reverse. There are hitches about the exchanging of prisoners; and then it seems as if Paris in her great strait will eat up the environs, and superinduce a want of everything but bare rations among the Germans. This is nearly done already. At the Crown Prince of Saxony's head-quarters I have not for a long time experienced any difficulty in procuring anything usually sold in a country grocery shop. This morning, prior to setting out for Paris, I went to fill my wallet with sardines, cheese, sausage, ham, and sundry other viands that might not as yet be plentiful inside the city. Both our shops were cleaned out. All you could buy was writing paper, candles, and blue ball, none of them of an eligible description for edible purposes. Versailles is nearly as thoroughly depleted, I believe, and the Germans are now instituting some species of check on the irregular introduction of food into Paris—a course which does not by any means tend to their popularity. They are, however, toiling very hard to send on food trains by the railway. It may not be generally known that, although persons in German uniform are not permitted to enter Paris, very many notables of the besieging army have already been inside in mufti.

The Special Correspondent at Paris wrote on the 9th of February:—

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I find that the first impression produced on visitors to Paris is incredulity as to the distress of the people. These visitors go into the restaurants and see plenty of food there, which they can eat with pleasure, and they conclude that there has been no great suffering—no great privation. I know two gentlemen who came into Paris with provisions—a fowl and a turkey—and who have so little imagination, that as they saw fowls and turkeys in the shop windows, and fowls on the bills of fare at the restaurants (where, however, the price for the wing of a fowl was ten francs), that they determined to look after themselves in the first place, and quietly eat their fowl and their turkey. They were unable to imagine the condition of men and women who had been feeding for months on one kind of food, which had become nauseous to them; and who had too much self-restraint to express any craving for fresh food, to which they knew perfectly well that other sufferers were still better entitled—men and women who had been absolutely starving. Fortunately for myself, I was able to gaze without envy on the fowl and turkey I speak of. Kind friends in London and at Versailles had very quickly sent me in stores, so that I was comparatively well off; but I know of several to whom a bit of fowl or any good English meat would have been a godsend. The men who had no imagination could not understand this—could not imagine concealed hunger and the craving for a change of food; and when they went into the restaurants, replenished by the opening of communications with the provinces, they tasted of certain stews, and, in the spirit of Mr. Squeers, smacking his lips over the diluted soup of his pupils, they cried, “Here ’s richness!”

The Special Correspondent with the Crown Prince of Prussia wrote, on the 13th, from Paris:—

There are so many poor families returning to the abandoned villages round Paris, and so many returning to homes more or less desolate within the city walls, that one constantly meets parties of women and children on the move, with truckloads of furniture and baskets of provisions. The mere ebb and flow of the human tide in the Parisian faubourgs which have been under bombardment has been very great. Thousands who fled for a time, and found what shelter they could elsewhere, have returned home since the beginning of the armistice. But they had news of their dangerous dwellings even whilst they were absent—Paris was keenly alive to all that went forward within the walls—and they could reconnoitre the neighbourhood as often as they pleased. It was among the outlying villages and the people of the immediate scene of hostilities that the dreary blank of the siege time was most oppressive. When I travelled on an omnibus to Pont-du-Jour the other morning, I saw myself surrounded by returning refugees. They were bound to their home in Billancourt, of which they had heard nothing for so long that they feared it must be in ruins. But the husband had been out to look for the house as soon as it was possible to visit the outposts, and he had come back to tell them that the damage was not very great. The windows and doors were broken, and one shell had gone through the roof. Except that, all was in good order. "And where was the husband now?" I asked, for the party round me, shivering with cold and laughing with joy, on the top of the omnibus, consisted of two women and half a dozen children. "Oh, he is gone with our goods, monsieur; he has hired a little cart, and he and Adolphe are taking the furniture home." Adolphe is a rudely strong boy, well able to help, and the women laugh at the thought of this rude strength in an urchin of eleven. One woman is the mother, or rather

the grandmother, though her first character is constantly brought forward by the married daughter, who invariably calls her *mère*. "Now, then, *ma mère*, hold Josephine tight. She will let the basket fall, her fingers are so cold. Do you see the cart, mother? We shall pass it soon. How hard they push it! That boy is almost as strong as his father;" and we catch a glimpse of a bright young face looking up from the side of an anxious, haggard man, who can scarcely "tackle" the weight of his household goods, small as they are. The children all look back with envy at the proud position of Master Adolphe, and an elder sister just saves the youngest boy from pitching off the omnibus in his excitement. As to little Josephine, she is caught up and hugged by that feeble-minded hard-handed old grandmother, who chuckles with delight at seeing the furniture so well advanced on its way. I hear no complaints against the Government or the weather. "Go to, then," says one woman, "it is not pretty to ride on the top of the omnibus with so many children."—"But they cannot walk so far," replies another, "for we shall have yet a long way when we pass the ramparts, and if there are no places inside, what can we do but ride on the top?" I watch them alighting with no little amusement, for every one who is bigger and stronger than any one else takes care of that person. The elder sister and the small brother help to hand down little Josephine; and the grandmother takes care of all the bundles until I have passed them down for her. Then the column of march is formed, and, often looking back to see whether papa is behind them, they set forward towards the abandoned home. "Only doors and windows broken," cries the *grand'mère*. "Why, it is not so very cold now; and we shall have them mended before the winter—and the house might have been burned!"

M. Thiers, the Plenipotentiary of France, as well as the head of its Government, arrived in Paris from Bordeaux late on the night of Monday the 20th of February, and on the following day proceeded to Versailles. The resolution of the Assembly on M. Keller's proposal, respecting Alsace and Lorraine, had left him free to sign preliminaries of peace on the best terms he could obtain; but the circumstances against which he had to contend might well appal the stoutest heart. Nevertheless, he prepared to make the best possible fight for his country on the only field that now remained to her. Count Bismarck's demands were known in their generality, and it would be in vain to struggle against any resolution which he might have definitely adopted; but there was always the chance that something might be included in his conditions on which he would not think it worth while to insist. The Imperial Chancellor required large territorial cessions, including some of the finest fortresses of France, and an immense pecuniary indemnity, and he announced that the Emperor, his master, reserved the right of occupying Paris with a military force. The principle of a pecuniary indemnity, and that of a surrender of territory, were no longer rejected by French statesmanship; and it remained to be ascertained to what extent Count Bismarck would push them. M. Thiers found that Germany would require as a war indemnity the payment of five milliards of francs, or £200,000,000. The demand was resisted as one without precedent in history—one the very attempt to comply with which would derange the finances of the entire world. France had been weighed down with German requisitions for seven months, Paris having only just paid a war contribution of eight millions sterling, and she had her own war debt to provide for. The interest of the loan that would be necessary to provide such an indemnity as that demanded would utterly crush the great body of the tax-

payers of France, make their position intolerable, and lead them to prefer war at any risk to life under such burdens. The Imperial Chancellor was inexorable. France had caused the expenditure of the Germans, and France must defray it. Moreover, as M. Thiers had just said in the Assembly at Bordeaux, France was still young, vigorous, and full of resources, and immense economies might be effected by cutting down the war-budget. It was in vain to contend with the master of legions, and M. Thiers consented that France should bind herself to make the required payment.

The territorial surrender gave more trouble. It was known that Alsace, with Strasburg, must be sacrificed, but a struggle must be made for Lorraine, and, above all, Metz, the glory of military France, must be saved, if that were possible. For days the conflict raged once more around this fortress. M. Thiers reasoned, pleaded, and prophesied, and on the 22nd personally waited on the Emperor and the Imperial Prince of Germany to lay his appeal before them. Those august personages received him with politeness, but finally remitted him to the tender mercies of the Chancellor. M. Thiers was ready to redeem the fortress, to level it with the ground, to give pledges against its restoration ; but in vain. Metz had been won with the best blood of Germany, and M. Bismarck professed himself unable to overrule the firm determination of the German people henceforward to hold it as a bulwark of the Fatherland. As compensation, Count Bismarck was willing to restore to France the strong fortress of Belfort, lately surrendered to General Treskow after a long and arduous siege ; and M. Thiers was compelled to be satisfied with this concession.

Before a complete understanding had been arrived at on these points the Armistice was about to expire. In the Convention it was declared to extend from the 28th of January to the 19th of February, and subsequently, on account of the delays that had taken place at Bordeaux,

and still more on account of the time consumed in journeying between Bordeaux and Versailles, it had been necessary to prolong it until Friday, the 24th of February. At the request of M. Thiers it was again extended until Sunday, the 26th, but with an intimation from Count Bismarck that no further time would be granted. The German statesman further announced that, in the event of the signature of a treaty, a German corps would occupy Paris from the date of the expiration of the armistice until the ratification by the Bordeaux Assembly. M. Thiers, who knew that the Parisians were not prepared for such an occupation, and that it would wound their feelings even more than some of the most onerous obligations of the treaty, struggled hard to avert this humiliation; but he could only obtain a promise that in settling the manner and extent of the occupation his representations should be considered.

The negotiation of these conditions occupied Count Bismarck and M. Thiers the whole of six days. On Saturday, the 25th of February, the two statesmen were together for eight hours and a half, and the preliminaries were not signed until 6 P.M. of the following day. On Saturday and Sunday the anxiety of Paris rapidly increased. At the beginning of the week several of the newspapers had professed to be authorized to state that peace was certain, that Count Bismarck was showing a conciliatory disposition, and that the terms would be less onerous than was commonly supposed. By the end of the week the truth became known, and it was rumoured that the military occupation of Paris, and even the resumption of the war, might take place within a few hours. On Monday, however, each Government made known the fact that a peace had been signed. The Emperor of Germany transmitted a congratulatory circular despatch to the Sovereign Princes of Germany, in which he said,—

"With a heart filled with thankfulness, I announce to you that yesterday afternoon the preliminaries of peace were signed here, by which Alsace, without Belfort, Lorraine, with Metz, was ceded to Germany. Five milliards are to be paid, and portions of France are to remain occupied until the amount is paid. Paris will be partially occupied if the ratification at Bordeaux follows. We are now at the end of a glorious but bloody war, which was forced upon us with frivolity without parallel, and in which your troops have taken so honourable a part. May the greatness of Germany be consolidated in peace!"

The *Journal des Débats*, in announcing the peace, stigmatized the cruel use which the conquerors had made of their victory, and said that, owing to the severity of the territorial and pecuniary demands of Count Bismarck, MM. Thiers and Favre were several times on the point of breaking off the negotiations and risk seeing the war recommence. The Commission of Fifteen Deputies shared the emotion of the negotiators, and it was with heavy hearts, and hoping only in the justice of God, that they submitted to dire necessity. On Monday also it was known that the Germans intended to enter Paris, and many battalions of National Guards of Paris formed the patriotic intention of resisting the entry by force, and, supposing it was to take place at once, went out on Monday night, and remained under arms. General Vinoy severely reprimanded their conduct in an order of the day, but tumultuous manifestations of armed men continued, and the city was in a state of intense excitement. The streets were filled with people standing in groups, vowing vengeance against Germany, and imprecating curses upon all Emperors. The situation was becoming dangerous. Mobiles were breaking into prisons and releasing persons under sentence. The National Guard,

which, it will be remembered, retained its arms, began to remove its cannons, and place them in new positions without orders. To allay the excitement M. Thiers and M. Picard appealed to the public in the following proclamation :—

“Inhabitants of Paris,—The Government appeals to your patriotism and wisdom. You have in your hands the fate of Paris. Upon you it depends to save or destroy France herself. After a heroic resistance, famine compelled us to give up the forts to the victorious enemy. The army which we had hoped would be able to help us was driven back beyond the Loire, and incontestable facts obliged the Government and the National Assembly to open negotiations. During six days the negotiators fought foot by foot, and did what was humanly possible to obtain the most favourable conditions, and have signed the Preliminaries, which will be submitted to the National Assembly. During the time necessary for the examination and discussion of these Preliminaries hostilities would have recommenced, and blood would have uselessly been shed, had the Armistice not been prolonged.

“This prolongation could only be obtained on the condition of a partial and very temporary occupation of a quarter of Paris. If the Convention be not respected the Armistice will be broken, and the enemy, already master of the forts, will occupy, in strong force, the entire city. Private property, the works of art, and the public monuments are guaranteed to-day, but should the Convention cease to be in force, misfortune will await the whole of France. The fearful ravages of war, which hitherto have not extended beyond the Loire, will then extend to the Pyrenees.

“It is absolutely true to say that the safety of Paris affects the whole of France. Do not imitate the fault of those who did not wish us to believe eight months ago that the

war would be so fatal. The French army, which defended Paris with so much courage, will occupy the left of the Seine, and will insure the loyal execution of the new Armistice. The National Guard will undertake to maintain order in the rest of the city, as good and honoured citizens who have shown themselves to be brave in the face of the enemy; and this cruel situation will end in Peace and the return of public prosperity."

The issue of this proclamation had an excellent effect, seconded as it was by the advice unanimously given by the conductors of the Paris newspapers not to subject the capital to an unlimited occupation, to be accompanied by fresh exactions.

M. Thiers left Paris on the night of Monday, the 27th of February, and arrived at Bordeaux at 2 p.m. on the 28th. A sitting of the Assembly was at once held, at which M. Thiers rose, in the most profound silence, and said,—

"We have accepted a painful mission, and after having used all possible endeavours, we come with regret to submit for your approval a bill for which we ask urgency."

The Bill was as follows :—

"Art. 1. The National Assembly, forced by necessity, and not therefore being responsible, adopts the Preliminaries of Peace signed at Versailles on the 26th of February."

At this point M. Thiers was overpowered by his feelings, and obliged to descend from the tribune, and leave the hall. M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire continued to read the Preliminaries.

"1. France renounces in favour of the German Empire the following rights :—The fifth part of Lorraine, including Metz and Thionville, and Alsace, but without Belfort.

"2. France will pay the sum of five milliards of francs, of which one milliard is to be paid in 1871, and the remaining four milliards by instalments extending over three years.

"3. The German troops will begin to evacuate the French territory as soon as the treaty is ratified. They will first evacuate the interior of Paris and some departments lying in the western region. The evacuation of the other departments will take place gradually after payment of the first milliard, and proportionately to the payment of the other four milliards. Interest at the rate of 5 per cent. will be paid on the amount remaining due from the date of the ratification of the treaty.

"4. The German troops will not levy any requisitions in the departments occupied by them, but, on the other hand, will be maintained at the cost of France.

"5. A delay will be granted to the inhabitants of the territories annexed to decide for themselves severally to which of the two nationalities they will adhere.

"6. Prisoners of war will be immediately set at liberty.

"7. Negotiations for a definite treaty of peace will be opened at Brussels after the ratification of the treaty.

"8. The administration of the departments occupied by the German troops will be entrusted to French officials, but under the control of the chiefs of the German corps of occupation.

"9. The present treaty confers upon the Germans no rights whatever in the portion of territories not occupied.

"10. The treaty will have to be ratified by the National Assembly of France."

After the reading of these Preliminaries, M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire read the document relative to the entry of 30,000 German troops into Paris, and said that the contracting parties had severally reserved the right to give notice for terminating the Armistice after the 3rd of March. In that case a delay of three days must elapse before the

resumption of hostilities. The Government asked the Assembly to declare the urgency of the discussion of the Treaty.

M. Thiers made a touching and passionate appeal to the patriotism of the Assembly, in the painful situation in which the country was placed.

Several deputies for Paris, supported by M. Gambetta, offered motions in favour of delay, whereupon M. Thiers said: "We, like you, are the victims of a state of things which we have not created, but must submit to. We entreat you not to lose a moment. I implore you to lose no time. In doing so you may perhaps spare Paris a great grief. I have engaged my responsibility, my colleagues have engaged theirs, you must engage yours. There must be no abstention from voting. We must all take our share in the responsibility." M. Thiers concluded by expressing the wish that the Committee should meet that evening at nine o'clock, and that a public sitting of the Assembly should be held on the next day at noon.

In Wednesday's sitting of the Assembly, M. Victor Lefranc read the Report of the Committee on the Preliminaries of Peace. It recommended their immediate acceptance by the National Assembly, as their refusal would only involve the occupation of Paris, the invasion of the whole of France, and terrible calamities. The Committee earnestly urged the Assembly not to adopt so desperate a step, and expressed confidence that no member would, in the circumstances, fail of his duty. The Assembly was much agitated. M. Edgar Quinet protested strongly against the acceptance of the Preliminaries, as such conditions would destroy the present and future of France. M. Bamberger, a deputy from the department of the Moselle, adjured the Assembly to reject the conditions, and concluded his speech by a condemnation of Napoleon III. When M. Conti, late Chief of the Emperor's Cabinet, rose and attempted to justify the Empire, the Assembly enthusiastically and unanimously

voted by acclamation a resolution confirming the fall of the Empire, and stigmatizing Napoleon III. as responsible for the heavy misfortunes of France. Victor Hugo made a most impressive speech against the ratification of the Preliminaries. The Assembly, however, effected that ratification by 546 against 107 votes. Thus, then, were confirmed by the representatives of France, at the urgent entreaties of M. Thiers, the hard terms of peace against which he had struggled until further resistance would only have caused the German soldiery to be let loose upon Southern France.

On the same day (Wednesday, March 1) the German troops made their entry into Paris. After M. Thiers had left the capital, a dangerous revival of patriotic excitement took place, and to the last moment the authorities of Paris felt the most anxious concern for the peace of the city. All, however, passed off quietly.

The Emperor went early to Longchamps, and there inspected the troops of the 6th and 11th Prussian Army Corps, and the 1st Bavarian Army Corps—30,000 men—who were to occupy Paris. At 1 p.m. the Duke of Coburg, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, Prince Albrecht, Prince Adalbert, Prince Leopold—but neither the Emperor nor the Prince Imperial—entered with the army by the Arc de Triomphe, and marched through the Champs Elysées. The Palais d'Industrie and Cirque Impérial were assigned to the German troops, and a strong French force guarded the line which separated the occupied districts from the remainder of the city. The day passed off without serious accident, but was kept throughout Paris as one of mourning.

The ratification of the Treaty by the National Assembly having been notified by M. Jules Favre to Count Bismarck, Paris was evacuated by the Germans on the 2nd of March, and thus the homeward march of the victorious army was begun.

CHAPTER XXIV.

IN the last chapter of the earlier volume of this War Correspondence a short account was given of the French Peasant Relief Fund, which had its origin in the benevolent sympathy excited by accounts published in the *Daily News* of the extreme misery and want to which the inhabitants of the French villages had been reduced by the war. The good work has been continued without interruption, as without ostentation, to the date of the publication of this volume; and by the end of February, 1871, more than £20,600 had been contributed by the public for the humane object of the Fund. Included in this amount is £164, the proceeds of a lecture delivered by the Rev. Père Hyacinthe at the Hanover Square Rooms, which were handed over for the purposes of the Fund. At the request of several friends of the undertaking, and of purchasers of the previous volume, we subjoin a selection of letters from the gentlemen and ladies who have co-operated in the work of relief in France. Of Mr. Bullock's unremitting labours we can only once more state that they have been invaluable, guided as they have always been by a judgment equal to his generosity. The following are extracts from some of his letters:—

Falaise, near Vouziers, Nov. 9.—Although to eyes like my own, accustomed to the almost daily spectacle of Bazeilles—which is a most awful memorial of human vengeance, wreaked, too, on victims of whose innocence I have been

at the utmost pains to convince myself, a spectacle in itself more than enough to make one despair of nineteenth-century or any other kind of civilization—it is hardly possible for any sight to appear melancholy in comparison; yet the aspect of the blackened ruins of some thirty houses at either end of this unfortunate village impressed me afresh this morning with the dreadful and literal reality of what are called the horrors of war. With the exception, however, of Beaurepaire, which nine days ago was a hamlet, containing about thirty families, but is now a little Bazeilles, with a single family lodging in the single outhouse which remains, I am rejoiced to be able to report that the march of the German armies was not traceable by burnt houses or villages, or any conspicuous exterior marks of wholesale devastation. Of interior pillage I heard everywhere; but, unwittingly, an almost irreparable injury has been done to the peasant-farmers by the passage of the Germans, in whose wake the rinderpest followed so destructively, that in the commune of Grand Pré alone, which before the war possessed from 240 to 250 horned cattle, only fourteen now remain! A tenant-farmer named Hunin, with whom I lunched yesterday at his farm of Barbençon, in the immediate vicinity of Grand Pré, informed me that he had buried seventy-four beasts in four days, the great majority belonging to the German troops, and quartered on him for treatment. Of his own stock of sixty-six beasts before the war, but one cow and one calf remain, fourteen having died of the cattle plague, eight having been carried off by the Germans, and forty-four having been sold in Belgium or elsewhere, for what they would fetch, to save them from otherwise inevitable destruction.

The hamlet of Beaurepaire (for the immediate relief of which I left 100 francs in money preparatory to sending

clothes and provisions) was fired on Monday, October 31, by a party of German troops, sent for that purpose by the Commandant of Grand Pré, in consequence of the presence of *Francs-tireurs* in the woods between Grand Pré and Vouziers, who harass the Germans on their march between the above-named places. A fortnight since a German captain and several soldiers were shot dead on the road, and it was considered necessary to set an example of the result of harbouring *Francs-tireurs* by burning the village suspected of the crime. But if armed *Francs-tireurs* come into a village to provision themselves, how is it possible for the innocent villagers to resist them, even if they had the will? So the village gets burned, and the women and little children are unhoused at the beginning of winter, besides losing the bulk of their linen, clothes, and bed furniture, which, for the sake of the credit of the Germans, I regret to say, is, as a rule, as far as my evidence extends at present, plundered, in the first instance, by the German soldiers, and then sold by them to the Jews or others, who are reported to follow the camp in waggons, which are despatched to the rear whenever an opportunity occurs. Of this infamous traffic I have for the last four weeks been collecting frequent indications, which almost amount to proof, although it is necessary to be unusually wary in accepting French evidence against the Germans.

The following letter from Mr. Bullock reports the death of Dr. Davis, the coloured physician, one of the noblest martyrs of this war:—

Sedan, Nov. 30.—I grieve to have to report the death of Dr. Davis, the coloured physician, which took place on Sunday last, November 27, at Pont Mangy, where he was devoting himself to every kind of good work, for the benefit of the poor operatives and peasantry of the sur-

rounding villages. Dr. Davis's death will be felt as an irreparable loss, for in him the highest enthusiasm for the cause in which he was engaged was combined with great scientific attainments. Dr. Davis had but just returned from a ten days' visit to England, during which he had worked so hard in soliciting aid for his poor people, and travelled so continuously, that he was quite worn out when he got back to Pont Mangy. In spite of his fatigue, Dr. Davis insisted on visiting the military hospital at Sedan, where, going through the smallpox ward, he caught, as is supposed, the disease, which carried him off. During those trying weeks which followed the battle of Sedan, Dr. Davis devoted himself to the care of several hundred wounded Bavarians, whom he found in the direst need of medical aid and proper nourishment. Out of the funds entrusted to him by a few friends, he entirely supported his ambulance, where—if my memory does not fail me—on taking the management upon himself, he found nothing but a bottle of brandy and two lemons. Even before his wounded Bavarians were off his hands, Dr. Davis formed, and actually carried out, the project of establishing soup-kitchens at Pont Mangy and Balan, in behalf of the peasantry, of whose extreme want he was painfully aware. For he was assailed on all sides by the poor, who came daily in so distressed and emaciated a condition to consult him, that he decided that nourishing soup was the best medicine to prescribe for the majority. Finding during Dr. Davis's illness that these soup-kitchens were much in want of funds, with a probability of their beneficent operations being speedily arrested, I did not hesitate to subsidize them to the extent of £200 on Friday last, for which sum Mr. Hugman (Dr. Davis's assistant) gave me an acknowledgment. I am happy to say that, as far as we can see, there will be no interruption to the soup distribution, for the Pont

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Mangy kitchen will be carried on, I believe, by Mrs. Crookshanks, and that of Balan by those energetic and devoted ladies, the Misses Gulden, sisters of the Protestant pasteur.

So keen was Dr. Davis about his soup-kitchens, that a short time ago, when Miss Gulden told him that there was not sufficient soup for all the applicants, he took the watch out of his pocket, which he had gained as a prize at college, declaring he would rather sell even that than suffer any to go away without soup. The University of Aberdeen, where Dr. Davis took his degree of M.D., may well be proud of him, and Barbadoes, where he was born, will hand down his name to posterity as a bright example.

Dr. Davis's memory will live in many hearts and in several lands, under various skies, but nowhere will it be more treasured than in the villages about Pont Mangy, whence, for years to come, one may venture to prophesy, pilgrimages will be made to the grave of "the good negro doctor," in the quiet nook at Fond de Givonne, where he was laid yesterday. To that grave he was followed by a long stream of sorrowing peasantry—a most touching and eloquent tribute to the memory of him whose devotion to them had cost Dr. Davis his life in the flower of his youth. There were not many dry eyes when M. Philipoteau, the Mayor of Sedan, concluded his address by the following words:—"Must it not be that God recompenses those who, like you, fall victims to their charity and devotion? Have we not the right to affirm to this numerous assembly, that, dying at the age of twenty-eight for the love of your kind, you have found there on high a bright immortality? May our ravaged districts not be long in finding a worthy successor of the good works of him who was known to us as 'le bon docteur noir!' Adieu, Dr. Davis, adieu! or rather,

au revoir! if only, one day, God might grant us an ending resembling yours, however slightly."

At yesterday's ceremony French, Germans, and English attended indifferently, and the presence of Herr Strenger, the Prussian Sous-Préfet of Sedan, was a most satisfactory proof of the friendly feeling of the German authorities towards the efforts of neutrals to mitigate the horrors of war.

The following letters were written by Miss Cross, of Weybridge, a lady who has taken a most active and self-denying part in the administration of the Fund:—

Sedan, Dec. 13.—On my arrival at Sedan I had the good fortune to be at once introduced to the family of the resident Protestant pastor. I found them devoting their whole time in relieving the wants of the numerous sufferers by the present war. They had already established two soup-kitchens in the villages of Pont Mangy and Balan. Another was urgently needed at Givonne, a large village four miles from Sedan, with 1,400 inhabitants, whose houses had been pillaged and whose looms had been destroyed by the German soldiers. Funds were needed; and Mr. Bullock, seeing how urgent was the necessity that nourishment should at once be given to the starving inhabitants, whose only complaint was want of work, decided to devote some of the money collected by the *Daily News* for that purpose. But to propose and to dispose are two very different things. We at once set to work to call on the Maires and Curés of Givonne, Daigny, Illy, La Chapelle, and La Moncelle—small villages near Givonne. We asked from the Maires a list of the poorest inhabitants, especially those without any prospect of work. This was promised without fail that day, or the next at latest. With a good deal of difficulty we managed to get possession of

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a kitchen in an empty house, the landlord kindly giving it us rent free. Middle. Gulden then secured the services of an excellent woman to make the soup, one accustomed to the work, and who had spent the last three months in nursing and cooking for the sick, under the management of Dr. Davis, the deeply regretted coloured doctor.

The meat, bread, vegetables, fuel, all were ordered for a certain day, but no lists were forthcoming. The whole country was white with snow, the cold intense, most of the cottages fireless, the people shivered under their miserable garments; the soup was ready waiting for them, but how were we to get them together without the lists? "Cela ne presse pas, que voulez-vous?" say the men, with their hands in their pockets. At last we have the names of all the people, and we want to see with our own eyes how they live from day to day. They are thankful for the bacon that has been lately distributed by your Society, and very thankful for the warm clothing; they point with pride to the one blanket which somehow manages to cover a whole family for the night. The very clothes from the women's backs have been sold by the Germans. "I, who had three dozen shirts in the house, have only this remaining to me," said a bright-eyed, handsome woman, pressing close her miserable-looking baby. It was a great consolation to think that the good soup would bring colour and beauty into the child's face. The following day we lit our first fire in the dirty and damp kitchen; the stoves and other kitchen appliances were cracked and unavailable, the handle of the pump would not work, the water looked muddy, and things generally were cheerless, but our good cook did not lose heart. "You will see tomorrow when you come things will be cleaner, and the soup will be ready by mid-day." So we left her, and set

off on our way back to Sedan, with the snow still falling, and the roads in a dreadful state. Here and there a rough wooden cross stood out from the surrounding whiteness, marking the place where are buried, one on the top of another, hundreds of men who fell on the battle-fields round Sedan. Mdlle. Gulden pointed out to me the churches and cottages where the wounded were thrown in. These ladies attended to their wants day and night, shrinking from none of the horrors of their self-imposed duties, but still hundreds of lives were sacrificed for the want of immediate attention. One man, who had his leg amputated, escaped during the night from the sleepy surveillance of the *infirmiers*, and in his delirium dragged himself out on to the road as far as a cottage. The woman within, hearing a moaning cry, opened the door, and saw before her, in the moonlight, a man grovelling on the ground in his night-shirt. She lifted him in as well as she could, and offered him something to drink. "Non, non," cried the sufferer, pushing the cup from him; "*j'ai soif de ma mère, j'ai soif de ma mère.*" He believed his mother was coming to him, and he had gone out to meet her. He died the next day with his thirst unsatisfied.

Our second day at Givonne was upon the whole satisfactory. We started from Sedan at an early hour in the morning, with the snow thickly falling, but we had a warm welcome in our kitchen. The cook was busy among the pots, the pump-handle proved tractable; only the great *chaudron*, which was a fixture, was not yet in working order, so that we were short of our soup, and could only allow the people of Givonne to come. At a fixed hour they began to besiege the door, and were admitted four at a time. We armed ourselves with ladles, and began in good earnest helping the soup, cutting up the bread, and apportioning the little pieces

of boiled beef taken out of the soup, which are looked upon as great delicacies. The curious receptacles brought to hold the soup were not, I grieve to state, sufficiently clean for so great an occasion; "Mais que voulez-vous en temps de guerre?" is the constant excuse. We forgot our own hunger in our all-engrossing employment, and were very thankful at the end of the day to take up the fragments that remained, and drink some hot cocoa before returning to Sedan.

On our arrival at Givonne the next day, we found the great cauldron in working order, and already sending out great volumes of steam, so we felt sure that on this day no one would be sent empty away. The talkative crowd once more besieged the door, waiting hopefully in the cold for the warm soup. More than four hundred of the most necessitous received their portions, and the generous givers to the *Daily News* Fund would have been satisfied if they had seen the eager and thankful way the miserable people received their soup. A great many were so disfigured by suffering and starvation that their faces seemed hardly human; some could scarcely get up enough voice to answer to their names. There was no pushing or quarrelling, and they patiently waited out in the falling snow for their turn. One little girl, twelve years old, who bravely walked some miles to get the soup for her family at Balan, replied, when asked if she did not find it too far, "Ah, no; for such good soup one would walk many miles." The last I saw of her was lying in bed (from which Middle Gulden had removed her two little sisters) dying patiently of typhus fever; her mother and the two sisters were all ill of the same fever, and, there being only two beds in the house, the two little ones were put beside the one that was doomed. She died the following day as bravely as she had lived.

Sedan, Jan. 10.—We were prevented from going to the

distribution of soup at Givonne one day, and we found things had not gone on so well in our absence. Some of the recipients tried by all manner of means to obtain more than their just portions; the weakest went to the wall, and there was pushing and quarrelling. My companion made a most telling speech to the assembly before we commenced operations, saying that the *Société Anglaise* would at once shut up the kitchen if they made any difference in their behaviour when we were not there. The assembly, with many anxious gesticulations, promised everything under the sun. We then had the hard task to perform of striking out of the list some who, though poor enough, had already obtained work; others who were mendicants by profession, and whom the war had in no way affected; and others who had misrepresented their poverty. So little rancour, however, did a shaky old woman bear to one of the fault-finders, that she offered "ma fille," as she called me, her *chauffrette*, "as the floor was not made for such feet." These unreliable, clever, starving French peasants, bearing their sufferings heroically, have to be managed with strictness. It would be wholly disheartening to combat so much lying and deceit if it were not for the many bright instances of self-abnegation, of untold misery, and a quiet resignation to all the nameless horrors of this terrible war. Large as are the sums sent from England, and innumerable as are the garments worked by English hands, we feel it our duty to keep in mind that we must husband our resources for still harder times, and employ the fund strictly in the relief of the actually starving French peasantry. The next four months would have been for them a time of hopeless desolation if England had not come promptly to their aid; and this splendid promise of grain will have more effect upon them morally than even the warm clothing or the soup. The prospect of

sowing the grain will rouse them from their apathetic despair; it will give them work for the present, and hope for the future. When the men are not hanging listlessly about the doors of their untidy cottages, they are "en requisition" for the Germans, *i.e.* employed to draw about goods for the army with the horse and cart that in brighter days was the peasant's greatest pride. Day after day they are employed to serve the enemy, and it would be idle to expect them to put any heart into their work. Many stories are told of the cruel exactions of the Prussians, and no doubt the stories are true. Exactions must be made, and during war the brutal nature of man comes uppermost; but there are, on the other hand, numberless acts of humane kindness shown to the suffering peasantry by the invading forces; one and all seem to be particularly kind to children. The other day a big stolid German seized a baby from a terrified nurse, covered it with kisses, returned it, and passed silently on his way. One meets on the road genial and kindly faces, with the square heavy chin and keen shrewd eyes; never that unreadable look in the countenance that is a puzzling element in a Frenchman's face. In passing along the beautiful high road that leads from Sedan to Givonne one forgets for a time the all-pervading misery. The road seems so peaceful and silent, now that the snow has covered the blood-red earth; only the rough-hewn crosses or a flock of greedy crows recall the terrible waste of life. Three Uhlans come riding abreast between groves of leafless trees, whose topmost branches have been carried away by the cannon balls; their lances are at rest on their stirrups, and as they approach nearer one is struck by their unwarlike appearance. They ride perfectly, but boyish commonplace faces peer out of the black helmets. Then come the little beggars: "Un peu de charité," whines one. "Tiens!" cries another, draw-

ing away her companion, with a gleaming smile, "*elles sont les Dames de la Soupe.*"

We have just returned from Mézières, the deplorable condition of which town has already been described in your columns. We were only able to get information from the mayor. As yet nothing can be done. He says the people have at present plenty to eat; what they have not, they take; but the thing first to be done is to lodge them elsewhere; the air of the town is suffocating with the smell of burning bodies. A hundred have already been taken from the cellars. A crowd had collected round an opening. "What is it?" we ask. "Thirteen dead bodies." We pass on amidst the falling walls, the overhanging beams. One feels as if one were playing a part (and that a helpless one) in some terrible tragedy. The peculiar look of a street with the houses on each side completely gutted; the people silently and in a dazed way passing up and down it. Is it all a dark dream? Can it be true that while we in Sedan were listening to the booming of the cannon on New Year's Day, thinking it was only the preliminary fright the Prussians were giving to the inhabitants before the white flag was hoisted, that the people were being driven wild with the fury of the fire, the noise of the cannon, and the crumbling of their houses? An unhappy woman sheltered herself in her cellar to give birth to a son; the house fell in, and she was found, charred and burning, with the little one carefully wrapped in her petticoat. And they have only begun to dig out the bodies. The Prussian soldiers are at work, too. We see people hanging over the bridge. "What is it?" we ask. "Only a leg." We were not able to enter any of the cellars, though we heard people were still living in them; nor were we allowed to approach the church. The steeple is expected to fall down every minute.

Sedan, Jan. 20.—Yesterday we went to see some of the families who are suffering from the *fièvre de la guerre*—in other words, famine fever. I don't think it is on the increase, but it does not seem to diminish much: the rate of mortality, especially among children, would be very high, if it were not for the help sent from England. We found one poor mother in a state of stupefied despair, hanging over the bed of her little daughter, who looked as if she had not many hours to live—the eyes closed, the face drawn-looking and grey, and the pulse very high. She was gasping for breath, and the poor woman was trying to rouse her. "If this one dies," said she, gazing at her child with sombre tearless eyes, "it will be the worst I can go through." The suffering little head lay upon one of those uncomfortable paper cushions. The father lay in another bed near his child, his cheeks flushed, and his sad eager eyes following every movement of the little sufferer. We left wine, concentrated milk, and cheese for the woman, who, since the illness of her husband and child, had lived upon a little bread and bacon, lying in a dirty corner of the floor. She had not thought of asking one of her neighbours to fetch her bouillon from the kitchen. She gets it now, and her husband has lemons and sugar to make a refreshing drink. To-day we found the little one lying quiet and white—the expression of pain had left her face; there will be no more suffering for her. As for the mother, it seems hard that one woman should have so much to bear; her mother and sister died of the same fever, and her husband now raves in his delirium about his broken and burnt utensils. He was a thriving ironmonger at Bazeilles, and in a corner of the room lie, in a little heap, the smashed implements of his trade. My companion promised him new irons; so that when he got better he could begin to work again at once. A

gleam of hope passed over his troubled face for a moment; but then he glanced at the little motionless white head on the opposite bed, and sank back again on his pillow. They live now in a sort of loft—very dirty and cheerless, and with no means of ventilation except by the constant noisy opening of the door by the kind-hearted but indiscreet neighbours, who talk and groan in loud voices beside the sick beds, and express their opinion to the patients that they won't recover. A little farther on lives a family of seven in one small room; two are down with fever, and four were ill in bed. The ascent to the room was entirely dark, which was perhaps as well; the dirt of ages was on the stairs, the sweepings from the different rooms being deposited on the steps. It would be heartless to suggest to a half-starved, overworked mother of seven children the cleaning of the stairs; nor would the father, suffering from the "*saisissement de la guerre*," and sitting helpless and patient in the chimney corner, see the necessity of rousing himself to set right the disordered *ménage*. His loom is burnt, and his life and energy have gone with it. What I ought to do is to take a broom and shovel and set about it myself. I have not done it, and can find no excuse for myself. There is not nearly so much illness at Givonne since the establishment of the soup-kitchen, and I hear the same remark in other places where they have been established. The little girls in bright new English petticoats, a coquettish English scarf or handkerchief round their necks, and their black hair tucked back under quaint caps. "Is it necessary," asks a pleading little voice, "to go back for the forgotten ticket?"—"Yes, quite necessary," we answer; otherwise the number of the family is apt to be strangely multiplied. I have known a family increase, in the space of an hour, from five to eight persons. We use 70lbs. of beef at 58 centimes a

pound, and 40lbs. of bread daily. Trade is reviving at Givonne since the English gold is paid so regularly once a week to butchers, bakers, and grocers. No questionable "bons," but ready money, which is the crying need just now. If the Society could keep up the soup-kitchens for two months longer, it would be the surest means of staying the plagues of famine and fever. The much longed-for blankets have arrived from England, and are being promptly distributed. All that one hears here is false news; we know nothing of what is happening, except from the *Daily News*, which is our only literature, and one feels guilty in reading even that when there are so many calls on one's time.

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